

T H E
E P I S T L E S

O F

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

Translated from the Original LATIN.

With EXPLANATORY NOTES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

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For ALEX. DONALDSON.

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B O O K VII.

Epist. I. PLINY to RESTITUTUS.

THIS obstinate illness of yours alarms me ;
and though I know you to be most re-
markably temperate, yet I am afraid
your disease should get the better of your mode-
ration. Let me entreat you then to resist it with
a determined abstemiousness : a remedy, be as-
sured, of all others the most noble, as well as the
most salutary. There is nothing impracticable
in what I recommend : it is a rule, at least, which
I always direct my family to observe with respect
to myself. I hope, I tell them, that should I be
attacked with any disorder, I shall desire nothing
of

of which I either ought to be ashamed, or have reason to repent; however, if my distemper should prevail over my resolution, I forbid that any thing be given me but by the consent of my physicians; and I assure the people about me, that I shall resent their compliance with me in things improper, as much as another man would their refusal. I had once a most violent fever; when the fit was a little abated, and I had been anointed *, my physician offered me something to drink; I desired he would first feel my pulse, and upon his seeming to think the fit was not quite off, I instantly returned the cup, though it was just at my lips. Afterwards, when I was preparing to go into the bath, twenty days from the first attack of my illness, perceiving the physicians whispering together, I inquired what they were saying. They replied, they were of opinion I might possibly bathe with safety, however that they were not without some suspicion of hazard. What occasion is there, said I, of doing it at all? And thus, with great complacency, I gave up a pleasure I was upon the point of enjoying, and abstained from the bath with the same composure I was going to enter it. I mention this, not only in order to enforce my advice by example; but also that this letter may be a sort of tie upon me to persevere in the same resolute abstinence for the future. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY to JUSTUS.

HOW is it consistent, that you should affirm you are at once engaged in a multiplicity of business, and yet at the same time ex-

* Unction was much esteemed and prescribed by the ancients. Celsus, who flourished, it is supposed, about this time, expressly recommends it in the remission of acute distempers.

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press an earnest desire to see my writings, upon which even the idle will scarce bestow some of their useless hours? I will not then break in upon your affairs during this summer-season; but when the return of winter shall make it reasonable to suppose that your evenings at least may be disengaged, I will look over my trifles for something to amuse your vacant hours. In the meanwhile, I shall be well satisfied, if my letters are not troublesome; as I suspect they are, and therefore shorten them. Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to PRÆSENS.

ARE you resolved then to stay sometimes in Lucania, and sometimes in Campania? Your answer, I suppose, will be, I was born in the former, my wife in the latter. This, I admit, may be a reason for a long absence, but I cannot allow that it will justify a perpetual one. But are you resolved in good earnest never to return to Rome, that theatre of dignities, preferment, and society of every sort? Are you obstinately bent to live your own master, and sleep and rise when you think proper? Will you never change your country-dress for the habit of the town, but spend your whole days unembarrassed by business? It is time, however, you should revisit our scene of hurry, were it only that your rural pleasures may not grow languid by enjoyment: appear at the levees of the great, that you may enjoy the same honour yourself with more satisfaction; and mix in our croud, that you may have a stronger relish for the charms of solitude. But am I not imprudently retarding the friend I would recall? it is these very circumstances, perhaps, that induce you every day more and more to wrap yourself up in retirement. All however I mean to persuade you to, is only to intermit, not renounce

your repose. If I were to invite you to a feast, as I would blend dishes of a sharper taste, with those of a more luscious kind, in order to raise the edge of your palate by the one, which had been flattened by the other ; so I now advise you to enliven the smooth pleasures of life, with those of a quicker relish. Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to PONTIUS.

YOU say you have read my poems ; you desire too to be informed, how it happened that a man of my gravity (as you are pleased to call me, though in truth only not a trisler) could at first fall into this way of composition. To take the account then a good way backwards, I must acquaint you, that I had always an inclination to poetry, insomuch that when I was fourteen years of age, I composed a tragedy in Greek. If you should ask me what sort of one ? I protest I don't know ; all that I remeber of it is, that it was called a tragedy. Some time afterwards, in my return from the army, being detained in the island of Icaria by contrary winds, I vented my spleen against that place in some Latin elegies. I have since made some attempts in the heroic kind ; but these are the first Hendecasyllables I ever composed ; to which the following accident gave birth. The treatise of Asinius Gallus was read to me one day at Laurentinum, wherein he draws a comparison between his father and Cicero ; and there I met with an epigram of Tully's on his favourite Tiro. Upon retiring to take my afternoon's nap (for it was summer-time), and not being able to sleep, I began to reflect that the greatest orators have been fond of poetry, and valued themselves upon it. I tried therefore what I could do in this way ; and though I had long disused myself to things of this nature, I struck out, in a much shorter time than I could have imagined, the following

lowing lines upon the subject which gave me the first hint :

*When Gallus I read, who pretends that his fire
Had far more than Tully poetical fire,
The wisest of men, I perceiv'd, held it fit
To temper his wisdom with love and with wit ;
For Tully, grave Tully, in amorous strains,
Of the frauds of his paramour Tiro complains ;
That faithless to love, and to pleasure untrue,
From his promis'd embrace the arch wanton with-
drew.*

*Then said I to my heart, Why shouldst thou conceal
The sweetest of passions, the love which you feel—
Yes, fly, wanton muse, and proclaim it around,
Thy Pliny has lov'd, and his Tiro has found ;
The coy one so artful, who sweetly denies,
And from the soft flame, but to heighten it, flies.*

From this I turned to elegy, which I performed with the same ease ; and being thus drawn in by the facility with which the Muses yielded to me, I proceeded to add to the number of my productions of this kind. At my return to Rome, I shewed my performances to some of my friends, who were pleased to approve of them. Afterwards, whenever I had leisure, and particularly when I travelled, I made several other attempts in the poetical way. At length I determined, after the example of many others, to publish a separate volume of these poems ; and I have no reason to repent of my resolution. They are much inquired after, and are in every body's hands, as they have even tempted the Greeks to learn our language, who sing them to their harps and lyres. But will you not imagine I begin to rave ? remember, however, poets have that privilege. The truth is, I am not giving you my own judgment, but that of others, which, be it right or wrong,

I am much pleased with ; and have only to wish that posterity may pass the same. Farewell.

*Epist. V. PLINY to CALPHURNIA *.*

IT is incredible how eagerly I desire to see you. Love is the first spring of it ; and next my being unaccustomed to a separation ! Hence it is, I lie awake the greatest part of the night thinking of you, and (to use a very common, but very true expression) my feet carry me of their own accord to your apartment, at those hours I used to visit you ; but not finding you there, I return with as much sorrow and disappointment as an excluded lover. The only intermission my anxiety knows, is when I am engaged at the bar, and in the causes of my friends. Judge how wretched must his life be, who finds no repose but in business ; no consolation but in a croud. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to MACRINUS.

AN uncommon and very remarkable turn has happened in the affair of † Varenus, the consequence of which is yet in suspense. The Bithynians, it is said, have dropped their prosecution of him ; being convinced at last, that it was extremely ill founded. A deputy from that province is arrived, who has brought with him a decree of their assembly ; copies of which he has delivered to Cæsar, to several of the principal persons in Rome, and to us the advocates for Varenus. Magius, however, whom I mentioned in my last letter to you, persists in his prosecution, and, for that purpose, is incessantly teasing the worthy Nigrinus. This excellent person was counsel for him in his former petition to the consuls, that Varenus might be compelled to pro-

* His wife. † See book 5. let. 20.

duce his accounts. Upon this occasion, as I attended Varenus merely as a friend, I determined to be silent. I thought it highly imprudent for me, who was appointed his counsel by the senate, to attempt to defend him as a person accused, when it was his business to insist that there was actually no charge subsisting against him. However, when Nigrinus had finished his speech, the consuls turning their eyes upon me, I rose up, and, *when they should hear, I said, what the real deputies from the province had to object against the motion of Nigrinus, they would be sensible that my silence was not without just reason.* Upon this Nigrinus asked me to whom these deputies were sent? I replied, *That the decree of the province was directed to me among others.* He returned, *That is a point, though it may be clear to you, I am not so well satisfied of.* To this I answered, *Though it may not be so evident to you, who are concerned to support the accusation, it may be extremely clear to me, who am on the more favourable side.* Then Polyænus, the deputy from the province, acquainted the senate with the reasons for superseding the prosecution, but desired it might be without prejudice to Cæsar's determination. Magius answered him; Polyænus replied; as for myself, I only now and then threw in a word, observing in general a profound silence. For I have learned, that upon some occasions there is as much rhetoric in taciturnity, as in all the pomp of the most studied eloquence: and I remember, in some criminal cases, to have done even more service to my clients by a judicious silence, than I could have expected from the most artful speech. To enter into the subject of eloquence, is indeed very foreign to the intent of my letter, yet allow me to give you one instance in proof of the observation I just mentioned. A certain lady having lost her son, suspected that his freedmen whom he had appointed coheirs with

her, were guilty of forging the will and poisoning him. Accordingly she charged them with the fact before the emperor, who directed Julius Servianus to try the cause. I was counsel for the defendants; and the case being exceedingly remarkable, and the advocates concerned on both sides of high reputation, it drew together a very numerous audience. The event was, the servants being put to the torture, my clients were acquitted. But the mother applied a second time to the emperor, pretending she had discovered some new evidence. Servianus was therefore directed to rehear the cause, and see if she could produce any fresh proofs. Julius Africanus was counsel for the mother, a young man of good parts, but little experience. He is grandson to the famous orator of that name, of whom it is reported that Passienus Crispus hearing him one day plead, archly said, *All this, I own, is extremely fine; but what is it to the purpose?* Julius Africanus, I say, having harangued a great deal, and exhausted the portion of time allotted to him, entreated Servianus to allow him to add one word more. When he had finished, and the eyes of the whole assembly had been fixed a considerable time upon me, I rose up; *I would have answered Africanus*, said I, *if he had added that one word he begged leave to do, in which I doubt not he would have told us something we had not heard before.* I do not remember to have gained so much applause by any speech that I ever made, as I did here upon making none. Thus the little that I said for Varenus, was received with the same general approbation. The consuls, agreeably to the request of Polyænus, reserved the whole affair for the determination of the emperor, whose resolution I impatiently wait for; as that will decide, whether I may sit down in full security with respect to Varenus; or must again re-
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new all my care and solicitude upon his account.
Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to SATURNINUS.

Lately I both presented your thanks to our friend Priscus, and have again repeated them, since such was your desire; and that most willingly. It is with great pleasure I see so much harmony subsist between two such worthy men, whom I tenderly esteem, and that you consider each other's friendship as the highest obligation. For he professes also on his part to receive much happiness from yours, and, with a very generous contention, endeavours to rival you in that reciprocal affection, which time, I am persuaded, will augment.

I regret that any business should call you off from your studies; however, when you shall have compromised (as you say you are upon the point of doing) one cause, and brought the other to a hearing, you will be at leisure to enjoy the retirement of the country; and when you are satiated with that, we may hope for your return hither. Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to PRISCUS.

I Cannot express how agreeable it is to me, that our friend Saturninus sends me letter after letter upon the subject of your favours to him. May you go on as you began, and continue to cherish an affection for so worthy a man, from whose friendship you will receive a strong and lasting pleasure. For as he is greatly distinguished by every other virtue, so particularly by his invariable attachment to his friends. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. IX. PLINY to CORNELIUS FUSCUS.

YOU desire to know from me, in what method you ought to pursue your studies in that retirement to which you have long since withdrawn. In the first place then, I look upon it as a very advantageous practice (and it is what many recommend) to translate either from Greek into Latin, or from Latin into Greek. By this means you will furnish yourself with noble and proper expressions, with variety of beautiful figures, and an ease and strength of style. Besides, by imitating the most approved authors, you will find your imagination heated, and fall insensibly into a similar turn of thought; at the same time that those things which you may possibly have overlooked in a common way of reading, cannot escape you in translating: and this method will open your understanding, and improve your judgment. It may not be amiss after you have read an author, in order to make yourself master of his subject and argument, from his reader to turn, as it were, his rival, and attempt something of your own in the same way; and then make an impartial comparison between your performance and his, in order to see in what points either you or he most happily succeeded. It will be a matter of very pleasing congratulation to yourself, if you shall find in some things, that you have the advantage of him, as it will be a great mortification if he should rise above you in all. You may sometimes venture, in these little essays, to try your strength upon the most shining passages of a distinguished author. The attempt, indeed, will be something bold; but as it is a contention which passes in secret, it cannot be taxed with presumption. Not but that we have seen instances of persons, who have publicly entered this
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fort of lifts with great success, and while they did not despair of overtaking, have gloriously advanced before those whom they thought it sufficient honour to follow. After you have thus finished a composition, you may lay it aside, until it is no longer fresh in your memory, and then take it up, in order to revise and correct it. You will find several things to retain, but still more to reject; you will add a new thought here, and alter another there. It is a laborious and tedious task, I own, thus to re-enflame the mind after the first heat is over, to recover an impulse when its force has been checked and spent, in a word, to interweave new parts into the texture of a composition, without disturbing or confounding the original plan; but the advantage attending this method will overbalance the difficulty. I know the bent of your present attention is directed towards the eloquence of the bar; but I would not for that reason advise you never to quit the style of dispute and contention. As land is improved by sowing it with various seeds, so is the mind by exercising it with different studies. I would recommend it to you therefore, sometimes to single out a fine passage of history; sometimes to exercise yourself in the epistolary style, and sometimes the poetical. For it frequently happens, that in pleading one has occasion to make use not only of historical, but even poetical descriptions; as by the epistolary manner of writing you will acquire a close and easy expression. It will be extremely proper also to unbend your mind with poetry: when I say so, I do not mean that species of it which turns upon subjects of great length, (for that is fit only for persons of much leisure), but those little pieces of the epigrammatic kind, which serve as proper reliefs to, and are consistent with employments of every sort. They commonly go under the title of poetical

etical amusements ; but these amusements have sometimes gained as much reputation to their authors, as works of a more serious nature ; and thus (for while I am exhorting you to poetry, why should I not be poetical myself?)

*As yielding wax the artist's skill commands,
 Submissive shap'd beneath his forming hands ;
 Now dreadful stands in arms a Mars confeit ;
 Or now with Venus' softer air imprest ;
 A wanton Cupid now the mold belies ;
 Now shines, severely chaste, a Pallas wife :
 As not alone to quench the raging flame,
 The sacred fountain pours her friendly stream :
 But sweetly gliding through the flow'ry green,
 Spreads glad refreshment o'er the smiling scene :
 So, form'd by science, should the ductile mind
 Receive, distinct, each various art refin'd.*

In this manner the greatest men, as well as the greatest orators, used either to exercise or amuse themselves, or rather indeed did both. It is surprising how much the mind is entertained and enlivened by these little poetical compositions, as they turn upon subjects of gallantry, satire, tenderness, politeness, and every thing, in short, that concerns life and the affairs of the world. Besides, the same advantage attends these, as every other sort of poems, that we turn from them to prose with so much the more pleasure, after having experienced the difficulty of being constrained and fettered by numbers. And now, perhaps, I have troubled you upon this subject longer than you desired ; however, there is one thing which I have omitted : I have not told you what kind of authors you should read ; though indeed that was sufficiently implied when I mentioned, what subjects I would recommend for your compositions. You will remember, that
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the most approved writers of each sort are to be carefully chosen; for, as it has been well observed, "though we should read much, we should not read many * books." Who those authors

* Thus the noble and polite moralist speaking of the influence which our reading has upon our taste and manners, thinks it improper "to call a man well read, who reads many authors; since he must of necessity have more ill models than good; and be more stuffed with bombast, ill fancy, and wry thought, than filled with solid sense and just imagination." [Charact. v. 1. 142.] When the Goths over ran Greece, the libraries escaped their destruction, by a notion which some of their leaders industriously propagated among them, that it would be more for their interest to leave those spoils untouched to their enemies; as being proper to enervate their minds, and amuse them with vain and idle speculations. Truth perhaps has been less a gainer by this multiplicity of books, than error; and it may be a question, whether the excellent models which have been delivered down to us from antiquity, together with those few which modern times have produced, by any means balance the immoderate weight which must be thrown into the opposite scale of writers. The truth is, though we may be learned by other mens reflections, wise we can only be by our own: and the maxim here recommended by Pliny, would well deserve the attention of the studious, though no other inconvenience attended the reading of many books, than that which Sir William Temple apprehends from it; the lessening the force and growth of a man's own genius. For it may be justly doubted, with that ingenious author, "whether the weight and number of so many other mens thoughts and notions, may not suppress his own, or hinder the motion or agitation of them, from which all invention arises; as heaping on wood, or too many sticks, or too close together, suppresses, and sometimes quite extinguishes a little spark, that would otherwise have grown up to a noble flame." [Essay on learning, v. 1. 158.]

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are, is so clearly settled, and so generally known, that I need not point them out to you; besides, I have already extended this letter to such an immoderate length, that I have interrupted, I fear, too long those studies I have been recommending. I will here resign you therefore to your papers, which you will now resume; and either pursue the studies you were before engaged in, or enter upon some of those which I have advised. Farewell.

Epist. X. PLINY to MACRINUS.

AS I am always desirous to know the conclusion of an affair, when the narrative has been interrupted in the beginning; so, I imagine, you will be glad to be informed of the event of the cause between the Bithynians and Varenus. It was pleaded before the emperor by Polyænus on one side, and Magius on the other. When Cæsar had heard both, *Neither party*, said he, *shall have reason to complain of the delay; but I will take care to inform myself of the real sentiments of the province.* In the mean while, Varenus has gained a very considerable point; for can any thing make the justness of his accusation appear more doubtful, than that it is a question whether he is accused at all? We have only to wish, that the province may not again approve of what, it is said, she has condemned, and repent of her repentance. Farewell.

Epist. XI. PLINY to FABATUS.*

YOU are surpris'd, that my freedman Hermes has sold to Corellia, for seven hundred thousand sesterces, the five twelfths of my lands of inheritance, which I had directed to be

* His wife's grandfather.

fold to the highest bidder, and that without waiting for the time of public auction. And as you think it might have produced nine hundred thousand, you are so much the more desirous to know whether I am inclined to ratify what he has done. I am; and for such reasons, I hope, as not only you will approve, but will also excuse me to my fellow-coheirs, for having, upon a motive of stronger influence, separated my interest from theirs. I have the highest esteem for Corellia, both as the sister of Rufus, whose memory will ever be sacred to me, and as she was an intimate friend of my mother's. Besides, that excellent man Minutius Tuscus, her husband, has every claim to my affection that a long friendship can give him; as there was likewise so strict an intimacy between her son and me, that I fixed upon him to preside at the games which I exhibited when I was elected prætor. This lady, when I was last in the country, expressed a strong inclination to purchase something upon our lake of Comum; I therefore made her an offer, at her own price, of any part of my estate there, except what came to me from my father and mother; for that I could not consent to part with, even to Corellia. When the inheritance in question fell to me, I wrote to acquaint her it was to be sold. This letter I sent by Hermes, who, upon her requesting him that he would immediately let her have my proportion of it, consented to do so. Am I not then obliged to confirm what he has thus done in pursuance of my inclinations? I have only to entreat my fellow-coheirs, that they would not take it ill at my hands, that I have made a separate sale of what I had certainly a right to dispose of. They are under no necessity of being governed by my example, since they have not the same connections with Corellia that I have.

They are at full liberty therefore to be guided by interest, which in my own case I chose to sacrifice to friendship. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to MINUTIUS.

I Have been so much the longer in sending you the little book which I have drawn up at your desire, for the use of your, or rather, I should say our friend, (for what is there that we do not possess in common?), that you might have no time to correct, that is, to spoil it. After all, whether you will or will not find time for that purpose, I know not; but of this I am sure, you will most certainly spoil it, if, according to the custom of you people of a vitiated taste, you should throw out its most shining parts. I shall forgive you, however, if you should, and shall, upon some future occasion, very successfully make use of what your false delicacy rejects; as I doubt not to receive your applause for these different expressions which I have interlined. I suspected you would call every thing unnatural and bombast which is elevated and sounding; I thought proper therefore, for your ease, to vary the phrase, and take it something lower, or rather indeed, to debase it; though you, I know, (for why should I not rally your sickly taste?), will esteem it an improvement. Thus far, in order to make you smile in the midst of your serious occupations, I have been jocose; but, without doubt, I am wondrous serious in what I am going to add: I expect to be reimbursed the charges I have been at in sending a messenger express with this. Now are you not disposed to condemn this petition, not only in part, but in the whole, and insist upon it, that you ought not to pay for a thing which is absolutely of no value? Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XIII. PLINY to FEROX.

YOUR letter intimates, that you do, and do not study. This will appear a little enigmatical till I explain it. You expressly say indeed, that you have bid adieu to contemplation; but such an air of elegance runs through your whole letter, that it is impossible it should have been composed without much thought; unless you are privileged beyond the rest of mankind, and can write with so much politeness, thus carelessly and at your ease. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to CORELLIA.

YOU act indeed most honourably in desiring and earnestly pressing me to take for my share of the estate you purchased of me, not after the rate of seven hundred thousand sesterces * for the whole, as my freedman sold it to you; but in the proportion of nine hundred thousand, agreeable to what you gave to the farmers of the † twentieths for their part. But I must desire and insist in my turn, that you would consider not only what is suitable to your character, but what is worthy of mine; and that you would suffer me to oppose your inclination in this single instance, with the same warmth that I obey it in all others. Farewell.

* See letter the 11th of this book.

† Augustus imposed a tax of the 20th part of all legacies and inheritances, which he appropriated to the support of the army. This was deemed a heavy imposition, and accordingly it was eased in several points by succeeding emperors, particularly by Trajan, as appears from our author's noble panegyric upon him [sect. 37. &c.], but it was not wholly abolished till the time of Antoninus Pius.

Epist. XV. PLINY TO SATURNINUS.

YOU ask me *how I pass my time?* You know how much of it is disposed in the business of my post; what remains I devote to the service of my friends, and sometimes to my books; an employment which, though I will not venture to affirm it would be better, I am sure it would be happier, if I could say not only sometimes, but altogether engages me. I should be concerned to hear, that yours are of the sort which are least agreeable to you, if I did not know you are busied in the noblest offices; as nothing can be more worthy of applause, than to be active in the interest of one's country, and one's friends.

I was well persuaded the company of our friend Priscus would be extremely agreeable to you, as I know the simplicity, innocence, and politeness of his manners: but I had yet to learn (what I had the pleasure to be informed of by your letter) that he so obligingly remembers the services I have done him. Farewell.

Epist. XVI. PLINY TO FABATUS.

CAlestrius Tyro, to whom I am united by every public and private connection, is in the number of my most intimate friends. We served together in the army, as we were both of us *quæstors* at the same time to Cæsar. He got the start of me indeed in the tribunate, by the privilege which the law gives to those who have children; but I overtook him in the prætorship

* A law at first proposed by Augustus, but which afterwards with several alterations passed in the consulship

ship by the indulgence of the emperor, who dispensed with my wanting a year of the legal age for that office. I frequently retire with him to his country-villas, as he often takes the benefit of the air at mine. He is now appointed proconsul of Boetica, and he proposes to pass through Ticinum, in his way to that province. I hope, and indeed am well assured, I can easily prevail with him to turn out of his road to your house, if you should have an inclination to make any of those slaves free before a magistrate, to whom you have already given their liberty in the presence of your friends. You need be under no apprehension that he will look upon this as a trouble, who, I am sure, would willingly travel round the world for my sake. I beg therefore you would lay aside all scruple, and only consider what will be most agreeable to yourself; for be assured, he will take as much pleasure in executing my commands, as I do in obeying yours. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to CELER.

EVery author has his particular reasons for reciting his works. My principal motive is to receive proper criticisms upon such points as may, and undoubtedly will sometimes, escape my

fulshipp of Papius and Poppeas, A. U. 762.; in which amongst other things it was enacted, "That
 " all magistrates should take precedence according
 " to the number of their children; that in elections
 " those candidates should be preferred who had the
 " most numerous offspring; and that any person
 " might stand sooner than ordinary for an office, if
 " he had as many children as he wanted years to be
 " capable of bearing such a dignity." Vid. Lipsii
 Excurs. ad Tacit. An. 1. 3.

own notice. I cannot therefore but be surpris'd to find (what your letter assures me), that there are some who blame me for reciting my speeches : unless, perhaps, they are of opinion, that this is the single species of composition that ought to be privileged from any correction. If so, I would willingly ask them why they allow (if indeed they do allow) that history may be recited, since it is a work which ought to be devoted to truth, not ostentation ? or why tragedy, when it is adapted to action and the stage, not to a private audience ? or lyric poetry, as it is not a reader that it requires, but a chorus of voices and instruments ? But, possibly, they will reply, that, in the instances mentioned, custom has made it usual : I should be glad to know then, if they think the person who first introduced this custom is to be condemned ? Besides, the rehearsal of orations is no unprecedented thing either with us or the Grecians. Still, perhaps, they will insist, that it can answer no purpose to recite a speech which has actually been spoken. There would be some truth in this objection, if one were immediately to repeat the very same performance, and to the very same audience : but if you make several additions and alterations ; if your audience is composed partly of the same, and partly of different persons, and the recital is at some distance of time, why is it less allowable to rehearse your speech than to publish it ? As to the difficulty they may suppose there would be, in giving satisfaction to an audience by the mere recital of a speech, that is a reason which concerns the particular skill and pains of the person who rehearses, but by no means holds against reciting in general. The truth is, it is not whilst I am reading, but when I am read, that I aim at approbation ; and for that reason I omit no sort of method that can render my performances more correct. In the first place,

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I frequently revise my compositions in private, afterwards I read them to two or three friends, and then give them to others to make their remarks. If after this I have any doubt concerning the justness of their observations, I carefully weigh them again with a friend or two: and, last of all, I recite them to a more numerous assembly. This is the time, believe me, when I find myself best able to exercise all the severity of the most rigid criticism; for my attention rises in proportion to my solicitude; as nothing so much awakens the judgment as that reverence, and modest timidity, which one feels upon those occasions. For do but reflect and tell me, whether you would not be infinitely less affected if you were to speak before a single person only, though ever so learned, than before a numerous assembly, even though it were composed of none but illiterate people? When you rise up to plead, are you not at that juncture, above all others, most diffident of yourself? and do you not wish, I will not say some particular parts only, but that the whole frame of your intended speech was altered? especially if the circle is large in which you are to speak; for at such a season there is something even in the most vulgar audience that strikes one with awe. And if you suspect you are not well received at the first opening of your speech, do you not find all the energy of your powers weakened, and the whole strength of your resolution sink under you? The reason I imagine to be, that there is I know not what dignity in the collective sentiments of a multitude, and though separately their judgment is, perhaps, of little weight, yet when united it becomes considerable. Agreeably to this notion, Pomponius Secundus, the famous tragic poet, whenever his friend and he differed about the retaining or rejecting any thing in his writings,

writings, used to say, I appeal * to the people; and accordingly, by their silence or applause, adopted either his own or his friend's sentiments: such was the regard he paid to the populace! † Whether

* There is a kind of witticism in this expression, which will be lost to the mere English reader, unless he be informed, that the Romans had a privilege confirmed to them by several laws which passed in the earlier ages of the republic, of appealing from the decisions of the magistrates, to the general assembly of the people; and they did so in the form of words which Pomponius here applies to a different purpose.

† However unsafe, in general, an appeal to the vulgar notions may be, there are yet some cases in which their sentiments have ever been received by the judicious, as decisive. The merit of performances in the persuasive, or imitative arts, so far as the mere raising or representing the passions are concerned, will best be tried by the effect they produce in plain and unbiassed minds: for (as Tully observes) "that artist who has nature for his object, must certainly fall short of the truth of his art, where nature is not moved*." The custom which prevailed among the Romans of reciting their works of genius in the porticoes, and places of public resort, took its rise, probably, from the same notion of a general and innate taste being implanted in all mankind of what is just and natural in the moving arts. It was upon this principle likewise, that the great masters in painting and statuary in ancient Greece, exhibited their performances to public view, and corrected them by the popular feelings. There is a remarkable story told of Annibal Carrache, which shews he received the same standard of merit. He took notice that a famous picture of Dominichin's representing the flagellation of St Andrew, made a very strong impression upon an old woman, who at the same time seemed little affected with another picture of a martyrdom

* De orat. lib. 1.

done

ther with justice or not, it does not concern me to determine, as I never recite my works publicly, but only before a select number of friends, whose presence I respect, and whose judgment I value; in a word, whose opinions I observe as if they were so many individuals I had separately consulted, at the same time that I stand in as much fear of them as I should of the most numerous assembly. What Cicero says of composing, will, in my opinion, hold true of that awe we have of the public: "It is the most rigid critic imaginable." The very thoughts of reciting, the notion of entering an assembly, and the reverential concern when one is there; each of these circumstances tends to improve and perfect an author's performance. Upon the whole, therefore, I cannot repent of a custom which I have experienced to be so exceedingly beneficial; and am so far from being discouraged by the trifling objections of these censors, that I beg you would point out to me if there is yet any other method of correction, that I may add to this; for nothing can sufficiently satisfy my care to render my compositions finished. I reflect what an arduous undertaking it is to resign any work into the hands of the public; and I cannot but be persuaded, that frequent revisals, and many consultations must go to the finishing of a performance, which one desires the world should universally, and for ever admire.

done by Guido, which was placed near it. A debate afterwards happening about the merit of these two performances, Carrache decided the dispute by only telling this fact. Thus, as the poet observes,

—*The people's voice is odd,
It is, and it is not, the voice of God.*

POPE.

Epist.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to CANINIUS.

YOU ask my advice in what manner the money you have given to our countrymen for an annual festival, may be secured after your death. Your question proceeds from a truly generous principle, but the answer to it is not very easy. Should you pay down the money to the community; there is great danger that it will be squandered away. Should you settle lands for that purpose; they will probably be neglected, as those of the public usually are. Upon the whole, then, I can think of no method more eligible than what I pursued myself in a parallel instance. Intending to give five hundred thousand sesterces for the maintenance of children who were born of good families, I made a fictitious sale to the public agent of an estate in land which was worth considerably more, who reconveyed it back to me, charged with a yearly rent of 30,000 sesterces. By this means the principal was secured to the community, at the same time the interest was certain, and the estate itself (as it was of much greater value than the rent charged upon it) was always sure of finding a tenant. I am well apprised, indeed, that by this method I have actually given more than I appear to have done, as the value of the whole estate will be a good deal lessened by the incumbrance with which it is charged. But the interest of the public ought always to take place of every private consideration, as what is eternal is to be preferred to what is mortal; and a man of true generosity will study how to render his benefaction most advantageous, rather than how he may bestow it with least expense. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to PRISCUS.

I AM extremely concerned at the illness of Fannia which she contracted during her attendance on Junia, one of the Vestal virgins. She engaged in this good office at first voluntarily, Junia being her relation; as she was afterwards appointed to it by an order from the college of priests: for these virgins, when any indisposition makes it necessary to remove them from the temple of Vesta, are always delivered to the care and custody of some venerable matron. It was her assiduity in the execution of this charge that occasioned her present disorder, which is a continual fever, attended with a cough that increases daily. She is extremely emaciated, and seems in a total decay of every thing but spirits; those indeed she preserves in their full vigour; and in a manner worthy the wife of Helvidius, and the daughter of Thrasea. In all the rest she is so greatly impaired, that I am more than apprehensive upon her account; I am deeply afflicted. I grieve, my friend, that so excellent a woman is going to be removed from the eyes of the world, which will never, perhaps, again behold her equal. How consummate is her virtue, her piety, her wisdom, her courage! She twice followed her husband into exile, and once was banished herself upon his account. For Senecio, when he was tried for writing the life of Helvidius, having said in his defence that he composed that work at the request of Fannia; Metius Carus, with a stern and threatening air, asked her whether it was true? She acknowledged it was: and when he farther questioned her, whether she supplied him likewise with materials for that purpose, and whether her mother was privy to this transaction? she boldly confessed the former, but absolutely

solutely denied the latter. In short, throughout her whole examination not a word escaped her that betrayed the least emotion of fear. On the contrary, she had the courage to preserve a copy of those very books which the senate, overawed by the tyranny of the times, had ordered to be suppressed, and at the same time the effects of the author to be confiscated; and took with her as the companions of her exile, what had been the cause of it. How pleasing is her conversation, how polite her address, and (which seldom unites in the same character) how venerable is she as well as amiable! She will hereafter, I am well persuaded, be pointed out as a model to all wives; and perhaps be esteemed worthy to be set forth as an example of fortitude even to our sex; since, while yet we have the pleasure of seeing and conversing with her, we contemplate her with the same admiration, as those heroines who are celebrated in ancient story. For myself, I confess, I cannot but tremble for this illustrious house, which seems shaken to its very foundations, and ready to fall into ruins with her: for though she will leave descendents behind her, yet what a height of virtue must they retain, what glorious actions must they perform, ere the world will be persuaded that this excellent woman was not the last of her family! It is an aggravating circumstance of affliction to me, that by her death I seem to lose a second time her mother; that worthy mother (and what can I say higher in her praise) of so amiable a person! who, as she was restored to me in her daughter, so she will now again be taken from me, and the loss of Fannia will thus pierce my heart at once with a fresh stab, and at the same time tear open a former wound. I loved and honoured them both so highly, that I knew not which had the greatest share of my esteem and affection; a point they desired might ever remain

main undetermined. In their prosperity and their adversity I did them every good office in my power, and was their comforter in exile, as well as their avenger at their return. But I have not yet paid them what I owe, and am so much the more solicitous for the recovery of this lady, that I may have time to acquit what is due from me to her. Such is the anxiety under which I write this letter! But if some friendly power should happily give me occasion to exchange it for sentiments of joy, I shall not complain of the alarms I now suffer. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY to TACITUS.

I Have read your book, and with the utmost care have marked the passages which I think should be altered, and those I am of opinion ought to be expunged. It is as habitual to me to speak truth, as it is agreeable to you to hear it; and indeed none are more patient of censure, than those who have the best claim to applause. I now expect in return, your observations upon the treatise of mine which I sent you. How agreeable, how noble is such a commerce! and how am I pleased with the thought, that posterity, if it shall at all concern itself with us, will not cease to mention with what harmony, what freedom, what fidelity we lived together! It will be an instance as remarkable as it is uncommon, that two persons nearly of the same age and rank, and of some character in the republic of letters, (for since I join myself with you, I am obliged to speak of your merit with reserve), should thus mutually assist and promote each other's studies. When I was a very young man, and you in the prime of your glory and reputation, I endeavoured to follow your steps, and was desirous to be considered as next in character to you.

But next with many a length between!

And though there were, at that time, many celebrated geniuses in Rome, yet you, of all others, appeared to me, not only most worthy to be my model, but, from a similitude of our dispositions, most easy to my imitation. It is particularly agreeable to me therefore to find, that in all companies where learning is the topic of conversation, we are always mentioned together, and that my name immediately follows yours. It is true, there are some who prefer you to me, as others, on the contrary, give me the advantage; but I am little solicitous in what order we are placed, so that we stand united; for, in my estimation, whoever is next to you must be before every body else. You even see * in wills (unless in the case of particular friendship to either of us) we are always equally considered, and that the legacies bequeathed to us are generally the same, both in number and value. Since therefore we are thus closely linked together by a similitude of

* It was the peculiar custom of Rome, for the clients and dependents of families, to bequeath at their death to their patrons some considerable part of their estates, as the most effectual testimony of their respect and gratitude; and the more a man received in this way, the more it redounded to his credit. Thus Cicero mentions it to the honour of Lucullus, that, while he governed Asia as proconsul, many great estates were left to him by will. And Nepos tells us, in praise of Atticus, that he succeeded to many inheritances of the same kind, bequeathed to him on no other account, than of his friendly and amiable temper. Cicero, when he was falsely reproached by Antony, with being neglected on these occasions, declared in his reply, that he had gained from this single article, about two hundred thousand pounds. *Middleton's life of Tully, v. 2. § 14.*

studies,

studies, manners, reputation, and even by those last instances of human judgment, should it not mutually tend to inflame us with the most ardent affection? Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY to CORNUTUS.

I Obey, my dearest colleague, and consult the weakness of my eyes, as you injoin me. For I came hither in a covered litter, in which I was as much sheltered as if I had been in my chamber. I forbear too (with difficulty indeed, however I do forbear) as well writing as reading, and study only with my ears. By drawing the curtains of my chamber, I make it gloomy, but not dark; and when I walk in my covered portico, I shut the lower range of windows, and by that means enjoy as much shade as light. Thus I endeavour to accustom myself to the light by degrees. The bath being of service in this case, I allow myself the use of it, as I do of wine, because it is not judged prejudicial; but I take it with great moderation. I do so, you know, at all times, but particularly now that I have * one who narrowly observes me.—I received the pullet, with great pleasure as coming from you, and weak as my eyes still are, they are strong enough however to discern it is extremely fat. Farewell.

Epist. XXII. PLINY to FALCO.

YOU will be less surprised, that I have so importunately pressed you to confer the tribuneship upon my friend, when you shall be informed who and what he is. As you have promised to support his interest, I may now venture to acquaint you with his name and character. It is Cornelius Minutianus, who both in rank and

* Meaning his wife, perhaps, or his physician.

virtue is the ornament of that province to which I owe my birth. His family and fortune are noble, and yet he pursues his studies with as much application, as if the necessity of his circumstances required it. He is a most upright judge, a most strenuous advocate, a most faithful friend. You will look upon the obligation as done to yourself, when you shall have an opportunity of taking a nearer view of this excellent person, who (not to speak in too lofty terms of so modest a man) is equal to all the honours and titles that can be conferred upon him. Farewell.

*Epist. XIII. PLINY to FABATUS *.*

I Greatly rejoice that you are so strong, as to be able to take a journey to Mediolanum, in order to meet Tiro: but that you may continue to enjoy that happiness, let me beg of you to spare yourself a fatigue so improper for a man of your years. I must insist then, that you wait for him at Comum, and that you do not stir out of your own house, nor even out of your chamber to receive him. As I love him with the affection of a brother, it would be unreasonable he should expect from the person whom I honour as my parent, a point of ceremony which he would not require of his own. Farewell.

Epist. XXIV. PLINY to GEMINIUS.

NUmidia Quadratilla is dead at almost fourscore years of age; fresh and hale till her last sickness, and of a strength and firmness of body unusual to persons of her sex. She has left a very prudent will, having disposed of two thirds of her estate to her grandson, and the rest to her grand-daughter. The young lady I know little

* His wife's grandfather.

of, but the grandson is one of the most favourite and intimate friends I have. He is a person of singular worth, whose merit entitles him to the affection of a relation, even where his blood does not. Though he is extremely beautiful, he escaped every malicious imputation both whilst a boy and when a youth: he was a husband at four and twenty, and would have been a father if providence had not disappointed his hopes. He lived in the family with his grandmother, who was exceedingly devoted to the pleasures of the town, with great severity of conduct, yet at the same time with the utmost compliance. She retained a set of pantomimes, and was an encourager of this sort of people to a degree inconsistent with a person of her sex and rank. But Quadratus never appeared at these entertainments, not only when she exhibited them in the theatre, but even in her own house; nor indeed did she expect he should. I once heard her say, when she was recommending the studies of her grandson to my inspection, that it was her custom, in order to pass away some of those unemployed hours with which female life abounds, to amuse herself with playing at chess, or seeing the mimicry of her pantomimes; but that whenever she engaged either in the one or the other, she constantly sent away her grandson to his studies: a custom, I imagine, which she observed as much out of a certain reverence, as affection, to the youth. I was a good deal surprised, as I am persuaded you will be, at what he told me the last time the Pontifical * games were exhibited. As we were coming out of the theatre together, where we had been entertained with a shew of

* The priests, as well as other magistrates, exhibited public games to the people when they entered upon their office.

these pantomimes, *Do you know*, said he, *this is the first time I ever saw Quadratilla's freedman dance?* Such is the character of her grandson! while a set of men of a far different stamp, in order to do honour to Quadratilla, (I am ashamed to employ that word to what, in truth, was but the lowest and grossest flattery), were running up and down the theatre, pretending to be struck with the utmost admiration and rapture at the performances of those pantomimes, and then mimicking all their gesticulations and repeating the songs, in order to pay court to the lady patroness of this company. But now all that these theatrical flatterers have got in return, is only a few trifling legacies, which they have the mortification to receive from an heir, who was never so much as present at Quadratilla's shews. — I send you this account, as knowing it is not disagreeable to you to hear the news of the town, and because when any occurrence has given me pleasure, I love to renew it again by relating it. And indeed this instance of affection in Quadratilla, and the honour done therein to that excellent youth her grandson, has afforded me a very sensible satisfaction; as I extremely rejoice that the house which once belonged to Cassius, the founder and chief of the * Cassian school, is come into the possession of a person not less considerable than its former master. For be assured, my friend will fill it as he ought, and its ancient lustre will again revive under Quadratus, who, I am persuaded, will prove as eminent an orator, as Cassius was a lawyer. Farewell.

* A famous lawyer who flourished in the reign of the emperor Claudius: those who followed his opinion were said to be Cassiani, or of the school of Cassius.

Epist. XXV. PLINY to RUFUS.

ALas! what a number of learned men does modesty conceal, or love of ease withdraw from the notice of the world! and yet when we are going to speak or recite in public, it is the judgment only of ostentatious talents which we stand in awe of: whereas, in truth, those who silently cultivate the sciences have so much a higher claim to regard, as they pay a calm veneration to whatever is great in works of genius: an observation which I give you upon experience. Terentius Junior having passed through the military offices suitable to a person of equestrian rank, and executed with great integrity the post of receiver-general of the revenues in Narbonensian Gaul, retired to his estate, preferring the enjoyment of an uninterrupted tranquillity, to those honours which his services had merited. He invited me lately to his house, where, looking upon him only as a worthy master of a family, and an industrious farmer, I started such topics of conversation in which I imagined he was most versed. But he soon turned the discourse, and, with a great fund of knowledge, entered upon points of literature. With what elegance did he express himself in Latin and Greek! for he is so perfectly well skilled in both, that which ever he uses, seems to be the language wherein he particularly excels. How extensive is his reading! how tenacious his memory! You would not imagine him the inhabitant of a country-village, but of polite Athens herself. In short, his conversation has increased my solicitude concerning my works, and taught me to fear the judgment of these retired country-gentlemen, as much as those of more known and conspicuous learning. And let me persuade
you

you to consider them in the same light: for believe me, upon a careful observation, you will often find, in the literary as well as military world, most formidable abilities concealed under a very unpromising appearance. Farewell.

Epist. XXVI. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

THE lingering illness of a particular friend lately taught me, that we are always most virtuous in sickness. Where is the man, who, under the pain of any distemper, is either solicited by avarice or inflamed with lust? At such a season he is neither a slave of love, nor the fool of ambition; he looks with indifference upon the charms of wealth, and is contented with ever so small a portion of it, as being upon the point of leaving even that little. It is then he recollects there are gods, and that he himself is but a man: no mortal is then the object of his envy, his admiration, or his contempt; and the reports of slander neither raise his attention, nor feed his curiosity: his imagination is wholly employed * upon baths and fountains. These are the subjects of his cares and wishes, while he resolves, if he should recover, to pass the remainder of his days in ease and tranquillity, that is, in innocence and happiness. I may therefore lay down to you and myself a short rule, which the philosophers have endeavoured to inculcate at the expense of many words, and even many volumes; that “we should practise in health, those resolutions we form in sickness.” Farewell.

* It is probable that fevers were the peculiar distemper of Rome, as Pliny in his general allusions to disorders of the body, seems always to consider them of the inflammatory kind.

Epist.

Epist. XXVII. PLINY to SURA.

OUR present recess from business gives you an opportunity to teach, and me to learn from you. I would therefore willingly know your sentiments concerning spectres, whether you believe they have a real form, and are a sort of divinities, or only the false impressions of a terrified imagination? What particularly inclines me to give credit to their existence, is a story which I heard of Curtius Rufus. When he was in low circumstances and unknown in the world, he attended the governor of Africa into that province. One evening as he was walking in the public portico, he was extremely surprised with the figure of a woman which appeared to him, of a size and beauty more than human. She told him she was the tutelar power that presided over Africa, and was come to inform him of the future events of his life: that he should go back to Rome, where he should be raised to the highest honours, and return to that province invested with the proconsular dignity, and there should die. Accordingly every circumstance of this prophecy was actually accomplished. It is said farther, that upon his arrival at Carthage, as he was coming out of the ship, the same figure accosted him upon the shore. It is certain, at least, that being seized with a fit of illness, though there were no symptoms in his case that led his attendants to despair, he instantly gave up all hope of recovery; judging, it should seem, of the truth of the future part of the prediction, by that which had already been fulfilled, and of the misfortune which threatened him, by the success which he had experienced. To this story let me add another as remarkable as the former, but attended with circumstances of great horror; which

I will give you exactly as it was related to me. There was at Athens a large and spacious house, which lay under the disrepute of being haunted. In the dead of the night a noise, resembling the clashing of iron was frequently heard, which, if you listened more attentively, sounded like the rattling of chains; at first it seemed at a distance, but approached nearer by degrees: immediately afterward a spectre appeared in the form of an old man, extremely meagre and ghastly, with a long beard and dishevelled hair, rattling the chains on his feet and hands. The poor inhabitants in the mean while passed their nights under the most dreadful terrors imaginable. This, as it broke their rest, ruined their health, and threw them into distempers, which, together with their horrors of mind, proved in the end fatal to their lives. Even in the day-time, though the spirit did not appear, yet the remembrance of it made such a strong impression upon their imaginations, that it still seemed before their eyes, and continually alarmed them, though it was no longer present. By this means the house was at last deserted, as being judged by every body to be absolutely uninhabitable; so that it was now entirely abandoned to the ghost. However, in hopes that some tenant might be found who was ignorant of this great calamity which attended it, a bill was put up, giving notice, that it was either to be let or sold. It happened that Athenodorus the philosopher came to Athens at this time, and reading the bill, inquired the price. The extraordinary cheapness raised his suspicion; nevertheless, when he heard the whole story, he was so far from being discouraged, that he was more strongly inclined to hire it, and, in short, actually did so. When it grew towards evening, he ordered a couch to be prepared for him in the forepart of the house, and after calling for a light,

light, together with his pen and tablets, he directed all his people to retire. But that his mind might not, for want of employment, be open to the vain terrors of imaginary noises and spirits, he applied himself to writing with the utmost attention. The first part of the night passed with usual silence, when at length the chains began to rattle: however, he neither lifted up his eyes, nor laid down his pen, but diverted his observations by pursuing his studies with greater earnestness. The noise increased and advanced nearer, till it seemed at the door, and at last in the chamber. He looked up and saw the ghost exactly in the manner it had been described to him: it stood before him, beckoning with the finger. Athenodorus made a sign with his hand that it should wait a little, and threw his eyes again upon his papers, but the ghost still rattling his chains in his ears, he looked up and saw him beckoning as before. Upon this he immediately arose, and with the light in his hand, followed it. The ghost slowly stalked along, as if encumbered with his chains, and turning into the area of the house, suddenly vanished. Athenodorus being thus deserted, made a mark with some grass and leaves where the spirit left him. The next day he gave information of this to the magistrates, and advised them to order that spot to be dug up. This was accordingly done, and the skeleton of a man in chains was there found; for the body having lain a considerable time in the ground was putrefied and mouldered away from the fetters. The bones being collected together were publicly buried, and thus after the ghost was appeased by the proper ceremonies, the house was haunted no more. This story I believe upon the credit of others; what I am going to mention I give you upon my own. I have a freedman, named Marcus, who is by no means illiterate.

illiterate. One * night as he and his younger brother were lying together, he fancied he saw somebody upon his bed, who took out a pair of scissars, and cut off the hair from the top part of his head; and in the morning, it appeared the boy's hair was actually cut, and the clippings lay scattered about the floor. A short time after this, an event of the like nature contributed to give credit to the former story. A young lad of my family was sleeping in his apartment with the rest of his companions, when two persons clad in white came in (as he tells the story) through the windows, and cut off his hair as he lay, and as soon as they had finished the operation, returned the same way they entered. The next morning it was found that this boy had been served just as the other, and with the very same circumstance of the hair spread about the room. Nothing remarkable indeed followed these events, unless that I escaped a prosecution, in which, if Domitian (during whose reign this happened) had lived some time longer, I should certainly have

* Those who are unacquainted with the genius of the ancient Romans, may be inclined to think meanly of our author's judgment, from this and the following story; but when it is remembered that the greatest characters which we meet with among that illustrious people, are all strongly marked with a vein of superstition, no particular charge of weak credulity can with justice be brought from hence against Pliny. The truth is, it was a national turn, and countenanced by the constitution of their government, inasmuch that omens, even of the lowest kind, were considered previous to every step either of foreign or domestic concern: and the wisest and gravest of their historians, the judicious Livy not excepted, have given into accounts of this nature. Even a noble historian in England has not scrupled to insert a relation of the same kind and credibility, in his history of the civil wars.

been

been involved. For, after the death of that emperor, articles of impeachment against me were found in his scrutoire, which had been exhibited by Carus. It may therefore be conjectured, since it is customary for persons under any public accusation to let their hair grow, this cutting off the hair of my servants was a sign I should escape the imminent danger that threatened me. Let me desire you then maturely to consider this question. The subject merits your examination; as, I trust, I am not myself altogether unworthy to participate of the abundance of your superior knowledge. And though you should, with your usual scepticism, balance between two opinions, yet I hope you will throw the weightier reasons on one side, lest, whilst I consult you in order to have my doubts settled, you should dismiss me in the same suspense and uncertainty that occasioned this application. Farewell.

Epist. XXVIII. PLINY TO SEPTITIUS.

YOU say that certain persons have condemned me to you, as being upon all occasions too prodigal in commendation of my friends. I acknowledge the charge, and glory in it too. For what is more honourable than the error of an excess of benevolence! But still, who are these, let me ask, that are better acquainted with my friends than I am myself? Yet grant there are any such, why will they deny me so pleasing a mistake? For supposing my friends deserve not the high encomiums I give them, certainly I am happy in believing they do. Let them recommend then this ungenerous strictness to those (and their number is not inconsiderable) who imagine they shew their judgment, when they indulge their censure. As for myself, they will never be

able to persuade me I can be guilty of an excess in friendship. Farewell.

Epist. XXIX. PLINY to MONTANUS.

YOU will laugh, and then you will be provoked to anger; then again you will laugh, if you read what you will scarce give credit to without reading. I lately observed in the Tiburtine road, near the first-mile stone, a monument erected to the memory of * Pallas, with the following inscription: THE SENATE DECREED TO HIM, AS A REWARD FOR HIS FIDELITY AND AFFECTION TO HIS PATRONS, THE HONOUR OF THE PRÆTORIAN ORNAMENTS, TOGETHER WITH THE SUM OF FIFTEEN MILLION OF SESTERCES; BUT HE WAS CONTENTED WITH ACCEPTING ONLY THE HONOUR. I am not indeed apt to wonder at distinctions of this sort, which oftener proceed from fortune than judgment; but I could not help reflecting when I read this inscription, how empty and ridiculous are those honours, which are thus sometimes thrown away upon dirt and infamy; which such a rascal, in short, had the assurance both to accept and to refuse, and then set himself forth to posterity as an example of singular moderation! Yet why should it raise my indignation? rather let me treat it as a matter to be laughed at, that persons of this character may not flatter themselves they have obtained any thing very considerable, when their success only exposes them to ridicule. Farewell.

* He was at first a slave in the court of Claudius Cæsar, who afterwards gave him his freedom, and raised him to his chief favour. The patrons mentioned in this inscription, are that emperor and his consort Agrippina, to whom Pallas had likewise recommended himself by some signal services.

Epist.

Epist. XXX. PLINY to GENITOR.

I AM greatly troubled to find, as you write me, that you have lost a pupil, a youth of the greatest hopes, by whose sickness and death, I need not be informed, that your studies must have been interrupted; since you are the strictest observer of all the duties of life, and since your affection is unlimited to all those to whom you give your esteem. As for myself, business pursues me even hither, and I am not out of the reach of people who oblige me to act either as their judge, or their arbitrator. To this I must add, not only the continual complaints of the farmers, who claim a sort of prescription to try my patience as they please; but the necessity of letting out my farms: an affair which gives me much trouble, as it is exceedingly difficult to find out proper tenants. For these reasons I can only study by snatches; still however I study. I sometimes read, and sometimes I compose; but my reading teaches me, by a very mortifying comparison, with what ill success I attempt to be an author myself. Though indeed you give me great encouragement, when you compare the piece I wrote in vindication of Helvidius, to the oration of Demosthenes against Midias. I confess I had that harangue in my view when I composed mine; not that I pretend to rival it, (that would be an absurd and mad attempt indeed), but I endeavoured, I own, to imitate it, as far as the difference of our subjects would admit, and as nearly as a genius of the lowest rank can copy one of the highest. Farewell.

Epist. XXXI. PLINY to CORNUTUS.

Claudius Pollio desires your friendship. I think him worthy of it, not only for that
 B b 2 reason,

reason, but because he gives you his ; as few ever require the one, without returning the other. He is an upright, honest, good-natured man, and modest, I had almost said, beyond measure ; if indeed it is possible to be so. We served in the army together, where he commanded a troop of horse, and I had an opportunity of taking a nearer view of his character, than merely what his being my fellow-officer gave me. I was appointed by the lieutenant-general to examine the accounts of the several companies, and as I discovered many instances of gross avarice and neglect of duty in some, so I found the highest integrity and exactest care in him. He was afterwards promoted to very considerable employments in the management of the revenue, yet no temptations could turn aside the innate bias of his soul from honesty, no prosperity swell his breast, but he preserved, in all the variety of posts through which he passed, an unbroken reputation of humanity ; as he supported the toils of business with the same fortitude of mind he now discovers in his retreat. He once indeed quitted his retirement for a short time, with great applause, being called by my worthy friend Corellius to his assistance, in purchasing and dividing out those lands which were given by the liberality of the emperor * Nerva. And could there be any thing more to his honour, than to be thus particularly singled out from so many others, by a person of so eminent a character ? You may judge how faithfully he reveres the sacred ties of friendship, by casting your eyes upon the last wills of several of his friends, particular that of

* Nerva restored to the Romans all that Domitian had plundered them of, and gave a very large sum of money to be laid out in the purchase of lands for the support of decayed families.

Musonius

Mufonius Bassus, a person of distinguished sense. Pollio (as he cultivates eloquence as well as every other valuable endowment) has very gratefully endeavoured to perpetuate and extend the memory of Bassus, by publishing an account of his life; a circumstance too uncommon, as well as too generous, not to be applauded, since the generality of the world seldom mention the dead, unless to revile them. Receive then this worthy man, greatly desirous (believe me) of your friendship, with the embraces of the warmest affection, and even invite him to accept of it as what you owe him; for he who makes the first amicable advances, cannot so properly be said to merit a favour, as a reward. Farewell.

Epist. XXXII. PLINY to FABATUS.

I AM much pleased that the arrival of my friend Tiro was agreeable to you. But I am chiefly overjoyed that you made use (as your letter informs me) of the opportunity which the presence of the proconsul afforded you, of manumitting several of your slaves. For as I wish to see our country improved by every possible method, so particularly by an increase of citizens, as that of all others is the strongest ornament a community can receive. I am pleased too (not out of a spirit of vanity, however I confess I am pleased) with what you farther add, that both you and I were highly extolled, in the acknowledgments which were made upon this occasion; for, as Xenophon observes, "the voice of praise is sweet;" especially when we think we deserve it. Farewell.

Epist. XXXIII. PLINY to TACITUS.

I Presage (and I flatter myself I shall not be deceived) that your histories will be immortal.

I ingenuously own therefore *, I so much the more earnestly wish to find a place in them. If we are generally careful to have our faces taken by

* As some ingenious writers have affected to draw a comparison between our author and Cicero, to the disadvantage of the former; it will not, it is hoped, be thought improper to set before the reader an instance, where Pliny greatly outshines that noble example he was, upon all occasions, so desirous of copying. There is a letter of Cicero's extant, to the same purpose as this of Pliny's, addressed to his friend Lucceius *, who was writing the history of his own times. The agreeable Montaign condemns them both as instances of immoderate ambition; and observes, that "fortune, as it were, in pure spite, has taken care to hand down to us the vanity of these requests, while she has long since destroyed the histories they solicited." Let it be remarked, however, in justice to our author, that, upon a comparison of the two letters, the ambition of Pliny will appear far more reasonable than that of Cicero; for the latter does not scruple to press his friend to transgress the rules of history, and break through the bounds of truth in his favour: *Te plane etiam atque etiam rogo, ut et ornas ea vehementius etiam quam fortasse sentis, et in ea leges historiæ negligas, amorique nostro plusculum etiam quam concedit veritas largire*: whereas Pliny, with a far nobler spirit, expressly declares he does not desire Tacitus should heighten the fact, and that actions of real worth need only to be set in their true light. In Cicero's letter we read the extravagant dictates of the most immoderate ambition; and he himself confesses he had not the assurance to look his friend in the face while he proposed them: *Eoram me tecum eadem hæc agere sæpe conantem deterruit pudor*: in Pliny's we see nothing but what is agreeable to cool sense, and the honest ambition of one who was conscious he had acted well, and desirous posterity should know it.

* Ep. fam. l. 5. 12.

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the best artists, ought we not to desire that our actions may be celebrated by an author of your distinguished character? in view to this, I acquaint you with the following affair, which though it cannot have escaped your attention, as it is mentioned in the journals of the public, still I acquaint you with it, that you may be more sensible how agreeable it will be to me, that this action, greatly heightened by the hazard which attended it, should receive an additional lustre from the testimony of so bright a genius. The senate appointed Herennius Senecio and myself counsel for the province of Boetica, in their prosecution of Boebius Massa. He was condemned, and the house ordered his effects to be seized into the hands of the public officer. Shortly after, Senecio, having learned that the consuls intended to sit to hear petitions, came to me, and proposed that we should go together, and address them with the same unanimity we executed the office which had been enjoined us, that they would not suffer Massa's effects to be dissipated by those who were appointed to preserve them. I answered, that as we had been counsel in this cause by order of the senate, I would recommend it to his consideration, whether it would be proper for us, after sentence had passed, to intermeddle any farther. "You are at liberty," said he, "to prescribe what bounds you please to yourself, who have no particular connections with the province, except what arise from your late services to them; but it is not so with me, who was born there, and enjoyed the post of quaestor among them." If such, I told him, was his determined resolution, I was ready to attend him, that whatever resentment should be the consequence of this affair, it might not fall singly upon himself. Accordingly we went to the consuls, where Senecio spoke what he thought proper

per upon the occasion, to which I subjoined a few words on my part. We had scarce ended, when Massa, complaining that Senecio had not acted against him with the fidelity of an advocate, but the bitterness of an enemy, desired he might be at liberty to prosecute him for treason. The whole assembly was struck with the utmost consternation and horror at this motion. I immediately rose up: "Most noble consuls," said I, "I am afraid it should seem that Massa has tacitly charged me with having favoured him in this cause, since he did not think proper to join me in the desired prosecution." This short speech was extremely well received by those who were present; as it soon afterwards got air, and was mentioned by every body with general applause. The late emperor Nerva, (who though at that time in a private station, yet gave attention to every worthy action which passed in public) wrote a letter to me upon the occasion with great good sense, wherein he not only congratulated me, but the age, which had produced an example so much in the spirit (as he was pleased to call it) of the ancients. But, whatever it be, it is in your power to heighten and spread the lustre of it: though far am I from desiring you would in the least exceed the bounds of reality. History ought to be guided by strict truth, and worthy actions require nothing more. Farewell.

B O O K VIII.

Epist. I. PLINY TO SEPTITIUS.

I Performed my journey happily, excepting that some of my servants contracted an indisposition by the excessive heats. Poor Encolpius, my * reader, whose assistance is of such service to me in my studies and amusements, was so affected with the dust, that it occasioned his spitting of blood: an accident which will prove as unfortunate to me, as to himself, should he be thereby rendered unfit for those purposes of literature in which he so greatly excels. If that should unhappily be the event, where shall I find one who will read my works with so much spirit and harmony, or admire them with so much fondness? But the gods seem to favour our better hopes, as his bleeding is stopped, and his pain abated. He is himself extremely temperate; as no care or concern is wanting either on our parts or his physician's. This, with the wholesomeness of the air, and the quiet of retirement, gives us reason to expect, that the country will contribute as much to his health, as to his repose. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY TO CALVISIUS.

Other people go to their estates in order to gain money; whilst I go to mine only to return so much the poorer. I had sold my vintage to the merchants, who were extremely ea-

* Persons of rank and literature among the Romans, retained in their families a domestic, whose sole business was to read to them.

ger to purchase it, encouraged by the price it then bore, and what it was probable it would rise to: however, they were disappointed in their expectations. Upon this occasion to have made the same general abatement to all, would have been much the easiest, though not so equitable a method. But justice, according to my estimate, is the noblest of all virtues, and to be pursued in one's domestic as well as public conduct; in minute, as in great affairs; and in our own, as well as in the concerns of others. And if every deviation from rectitude is equally * criminal, every approach to it must be equally laudable. In the first place then, I remitted to all in general one eighth part of the price they had agreed to give me, that none might go away without a mark of my liberality: in the next, I particularly considered those who having advanced large sums towards their purchase, and done me so much the more service, and had been greater sufferers themselves. To those therefore, who bought of me to the value of more than ten thousand sesterces, I gave back (over and beside that which I may call the general and common eighth) a tenth part of what they had paid above that sum. I do not know whether I express myself clearly enough; I will endeavour to explain my meaning more fully: for instance, suppose a man had purchased of me to the value of fifteen thousand sesterces, I remitted to him one eighth part of that whole sum, and likewise one tenth of five thousand. Besides this, as several had deposited, in different proportions, part of the price they had agreed to pay, whilst others had advanced nothing; I thought it would not be agreeable to equity, that all these should be favoured with the

* It was a doctrine maintained by the Stoics, that all crimes are equal.

same undistinguished remission. To those therefore who had made any payments, I returned a tenth part upon each of the sums so paid. By this means I made a proper acknowledgment to each of them, according to their respective deserts; and likewise encouraged them, not only to deal with me for the future, but to be forward in their payments. This instance of my good nature or my judgment (call it which you please) was a very considerable expense to me. However, I found my account in it; for all the country greatly approved both of this uncommon piece of generosity, and the method in which I conducted it. Even those whom I did not *measure* (as they say) *by the same ell*, but distinguished according to their several degrees, thought themselves obliged to me, in proportion to the integrity of their dispositions; and went away pleased with having experienced, that not with me

* *The brave and mean an equal honour find.*
Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY TO SPARSUS.

YOU write me, that the book which I lately sent you, of all my works, is your greatest favourite. The same judgment has likewise been passed upon it by another of my very learned friends: and I am the more inclined to believe that neither of you is mistaken, not only as it is improbable you both should, but because I am much disposed to flatter myself. I would always, indeed, have my last performance appear the most finished; and for that reason prefer the speech I lately published, to that which you mention. I will send it you as soon as I can meet with a safe conveyance. And now I have raised

Hom. Il. lib. 9. ver. 319.

your

your expectations of this piece, I doubt you will be disappointed when it comes to your hands. In the mean while, however, you may expect it as something that will please you : and who knows but it may ? Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to CANINIUS.

YOU cannot do better than in preparing to write a poem upon the Dacian * war : for where could you have chosen a subject so new, so full of events, so extensive, and so poetical ? a subject, which while it has all the marvellous of fiction, has all the solidity of truth. You will sing of rivers taught to flow in new channels ; of bridges thrown over immense rivers ; of encampments upon the dreadful steep of craggy mountains, and of a mighty king † superior to adversity, though forced to abandon his crown, and even his life. You will describe too the glorious victor's double triumph, one of which was the first that was ever gained over that nation, till then unsubdued, as the other will be the last. There is one difficulty however, and a very considerable one it is, where to find expressions equal to the grandeur of the subject ; a difficulty which seems almost insuperable even to your elevated genius, though capable of rising to

* Dacia comprehended part of the present kingdom of Hungary, together with part of Transilvania, Servia, Walachia, and Moldavia. It was first subdued and added to the Roman empire by Trajan, in memory of whose victories over this nation, the famous pillar is supposed to have been erected, called *Trajan's pillar*, which is still to be seen entire at Rome.

† Decebalus, king of the Dacians, who rather than fall into the hands of the conqueror, or live in dependence, put an end to his own life.

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the most sublime subjects. Something too there will be of labour in reconciling those barbarous and uncouth names, especially that of the king himself, to the harmony of Grecian numbers. There is nothing however so hard, that art and industry cannot, at least, mitigate, if not absolutely subdue. If Homer is allowed to contract or lengthen, or change even Grecian names, which are nothing harsh to the ear, in order to make them run more smoothly in his verse; why should the same liberty be refused to you, especially since it is necessity, and not affectation, that pleads for that indulgence? Come on then, my friend, and after having, as poets are wont, invoked the gods, and among the rest, that divine hero, whose mighty deeds and deep counsels you are going to celebrate, loosen all your cordage, spread every sail, and then, if ever, launch forth with the full flow of your unbounded genius:—for you must allow me to be poetical, when I am talking to a poet. And now I insist that you send me every part, as soon as it has received your last finishing touches; and even before, while it is only a rude sketch, and yet in embryo. You will tell me, that a detached piece cannot please, like one entire design, nor an unfinished plan be as agreeable as complete performance. I am very sensible it cannot, and therefore shall consider it only as a work in its first rudiments, as a separate and disjointed member; and shall faithfully lay it up in my scrutoire, to wait your last hand. Indulge me then with this instance, above others, of your affection, that you suffer me to be privy to what you would chuse to conceal even from every body. In a word, though the more time and caution you take in communicating your works, the more, possibly, it may heighten my esteem and approbation of the poet, yet the less you use

of either upon this occasion, the more I shall certainly love and applaud the friend. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to GEMINIUS.

OUR friend Macrinus has received a heavy wound. He has lost his wife! a lady whose uncommon virtues would have rendered her an ornament even to ancient times. He lived with her thirty-nine years in the most uninterrupted harmony. How respectful was her behaviour to him! and how did she herself deserve the highest veneration, as she blended and united in her character, all those amiable virtues that adorn and distinguish the different periods of female life! It should, methinks, afford great consolation to Macrinus, that he has thus long enjoyed so exquisite a blessing. But that reflection seems only so much the more to imbitter his loss; as indeed the pain of parting with our happiness, still rises in proportion to the length of its continuance. I cannot therefore but be greatly anxious for so valuable a friend, till this wound to his peace shall be in a condition to admit of proper applications. Time however, together with the necessity of the thing, and even a satiety of grief itself, will best effect his cure. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to MONTANUS.

YOU must already have known by my last letter, that I observed lately upon a monument erected to the memory of Pallas, the following inscription*: *The senate decreed to him, as a reward for his fidelity and affection to his patrons, the honour of the Prætorian ornaments, together with the sum of fifteen millions of sesterces: but he was contented with accepting only the honour.* I after-

* See book 7. let. 29.

wards thought it worth while to search for this decree, and found it run in a strain so very extravagant, that this proud inscription seems modest and humble to it. The elogiums which have been given to the most illustrious Romans, I do not say those of more remote antiquity, as the Scipios and the Mummi; but (to come nearer our own times) the Marii, the Syllas, and the Pompeys, fall infinitely short of those which have been lavished upon Pallas. Was it a spirit of banter, shall I suppose, or a principle of slavery that produced this decree? I would ascribe it to the former, were not raillery unbecoming the dignity of the senate. Must it be attributed then to the most abject subjection? Yet who is so wretchedly sunk as to submit to such meanness! Or was it the lust of ambition that gave birth to this decree, and the author, perhaps, proposed it with a view of paving the way to his own advancement? But whom can we suppose so mad as to desire to raise himself at the expense both of his own and the public honour, and that in a community where to be first in rank was only to be first in flattery of Pallas? Not to mention their offering to a slave the Prætorian honours; they were slaves themselves who did so: to pass by that part of their decree, where they say that Pallas ought not only to be entreated, but compelled to wear the * golden ring: no doubt it was not consistent with the dignity of the senate, that a person of Prætorian rank should wear an iron one: not to take notice, I say, of these slighter instances, let us observe the following very extraordinary clause: *The senate.* (and was it not purified after so vile a pollution?) *the*

* None but knights and senators had the privilege of wearing a gold ring; as an iron one was a badge of servitude.

senate returns thanks to Claudius, not only for the honourable mention he himself was pleased to make of Pallas, but for the opportunity afforded the house of testifying their good-will towards him. It was highly to the credit, no doubt, of the senate, not to appear deficient in point of gratitude to Pallas ! It goes on : That Pallas, to whom every man, according to his abilities, acknowledges his obligations, may receive the just reward of his fidelity and singular services. Would one not imagine that he had extended the bounds of the empire, or, at least, preserved the armies of the state ? But it proceeds : since no occasion more agreeable could present itself to the senate and the Roman people, of exercising their liberality, than an opportunity of rewarding one who had proved himself so honest and disinterested a guardian of the emperor's finances.—Such was the glorious ambition of the senate at that time ; such the highest pleasure of the people ; such the most agreeable occasion of exercising their liberality, to have an opportunity of exhausting the public treasures upon Pallas ! It follows ; the senate therefore voted that fifteen millions of sesterces should be paid him out of the treasury, and, as he has a soul far above desires of this kind, that the emperor should be so much the more strongly entreated to use his authority with Pallas, to oblige him to comply with the inclination of the senate. Nothing more indeed seemed wanting to complete this extraordinary scene, than that the imperial authority should interpose ; that Pallas should be pressed to yield to the senate ; that Cæsar himself should be called in to oppose this insolent piece of self-denial, lest the humble Pallas should refuse fifteen millions of sesterces ! He refused, nevertheless, the offer the public made him of this immense sum ; the only thing he could possibly have done more arrogant than accepting it. Yet even this the senate applauded, and seems to lament in the following clause.

clause. *But whereas our excellent prince and father of his country has, at the instance of Pallas, expressed his desire to have that part of the vote remitted which relates to the giving him fifteen millions of sesterces out of the treasury, the senate declares, that it was with much willingness and great justice they voted, amongst other honours, the said intended sum to Pallas, upon account of his fidelity and vigilance: however, in compliance with the emperor's inclination, which they think cannot without impiety be opposed in any instance, they obey it even in this.* Figure to yourself Pallas entering his protest, as it were, against the decree of the senate; moderating the honours which were offered him, and refusing, as something much more valuable, the fifteen millions, when at the same time he accepted the Prætorian ornaments, as a present of an inferior nature. Represent to yourself Cæsar yielding to the entreaties of his freedman in the face of the senate, or rather indeed, obeying his commands; for in such a case, to propose, is to command. Imagine the senate declaring in every clause of this decree, that it was with great willingness and justice the house intended, among other honours, to present Pallas with this sum; and that it would have persisted in doing so, but for the inclination of the emperor, which it was impious in any point to oppose! Was it owing then only to the obsequiousness of the senate, and the modesty of Pallas, that he did not carry off fifteen millions out of the treasury? And was it in this instance, of all others, that they would have made an exception to their obedience, if they had thought it right to have done so in any? And now, after all this, you will imagine perhaps, that you are got to the end. Have patience however, there is still something more remarkable behind: *And whereas it is highly expedient, that the generous disposition of the emperor to approve*

and reward merit, should be every where made known and celebrated, especially in such places where those who have the care and administration of his affairs, may be excited to an imitation; and whereas the approved fidelity and integrity of Pallas may stir up others to endeavour at so laudable an emulation:—

*It is therefore resolved, that the memorial which the emperor read to the senate on the 28th of January last, together with the decree of the senate thereupon, shall be engraven in tablets of brass, and hung up near the martial statue of * Julius Cæsar. It was not, it seems, sufficient that the senate alone should be witness to this complicated disgrace; but the most frequented place in all Rome was chosen, in order to display it to that and future ages: it was decreed, that all the honours of a most insolent slave, both those which he refused, and those which, as much as in the authors of the decree lay, he had borne, should be inscribed in brass: the Prætorian honours decreed to Pallas were inscribed, like ancient treaties or sacred laws, upon public and everlasting monuments of brass! so great was their—I know not what name to give it—that the emperor chose to display his weakness, the senate its meanness, and Pallas his insolence in the face of all the world! The senate was not ashamed to palliate this turpitude with the shew of reason; and a noble one, in truth, it was, even *that others might be encouraged by the rewards conferred upon Pallas, to a laudable emulation of his conduct!* Thus contemptible were all honours rendered, even those which the noble Pallas did not disdain to accept! And yet there were found persons of rank and birth, who were so humble as to desire and solicit those very honours, which they thus saw conferred upon a freedman, and offered by slaves. Happy for me that I was not born in those times,*

* In the Forum.

which

which I cannot help blushing for, as if I had actually lived in them! and I doubt not, they raise the same sentiments in you. I know the honest warmth of your temper, and am persuaded, though I may perhaps, in some places, have been transported into a higher strain of expression, than is suitable to the epistolary style, you will rather think I have shewn too little, than too much indignation. Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to TACITUS.

YOU have sent me your treatise, not as if it were sent from one master to another, or from one scholar to another, (as you are pleased to write me), but with the condescension of a preceptor to his pupil; for in that relation I must consider myself to you. Accordingly you summon me to my studies, whilst I am playing the truant, and prolonging the Saturnalian holidays.—Tell me now, could I have made you a more stiff and awkward compliment, or given a stronger proof, that I am so far from deserving to be your instructor, that I am not even worthy to be your pupil? However, I will take upon myself the character you have invested me with, and exert the authority you have given me over your book; and with so much the more freedom, as I have nothing to send you of my own in return, upon which you may take your revenge. Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY to ROMANUS.

HAve you seen the source of the river * Clitumnus? As I never heard you mention

* Now called Clitumno: it rises a little below the village of Campello in Umbria. The inhabitants near this

tion it, I imagine not; let me therefore advise you to do so immediately. It is but lately indeed I had that pleasure, and I condemn myself for not having seen it sooner. At the foot of a little hill, covered with venerable and shady cypress-trees, a spring issues out, which gushing in different and unequal streams, forms itself, after several windings, into a spacious basin, so extremely clear, that you may see the pebbles, and the little pieces of money which are * thrown into it, as they lie at the bottom. From thence it is carried off not so much by the declivity of the ground, as by its own strength and fulness. It is navigable almost as soon as it has quitted its source, and wide enough to admit a free passage for vessels to pass by each other, as they sail with or against the stream. The current runs so strong, though the ground is level, that the large barges which go down the river have no occasion to make use of their oars; while those which ascend, find it difficult to advance, even with the assistance of oars and poles: and this vicissitude of labour and ease, is exceedingly amusing when one sails up and down merely for pleasure. The banks on each

this river still retain a notion, that its waters are attended with a supernatural property, imagining it makes the cattle white that drink of it: a quality for which it is likewise celebrated by many of the Latin poets. See Addison's travels.

* The heads of considerable rivers, hot springs, large bodies of standing water, &c. were esteemed holy among the Romans, and cultivated with religious ceremonies. It was customary to throw little pieces of money into those fountains, lakes, &c. which had the reputation of being sacred, as a mark of veneration for those places, and to render the presiding deities propitious. Suetonius mentions this practice, in the annual vows which he says the Roman people made for the health of Augustus. *Suet. in vit. Aug.*

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side are shaded with the verdure of great numbers of ash and poplar trees, as clearly and distinctly seen in the stream, as if they were actually sunk in it. The water is cold as snow, and ~~as~~ white too. Near it stands an ancient and venerable temple, wherein is placed the river-god Clitumnus clothed in a robe, whose immediate presence the prophetic oracles here delivered, sufficiently testify. Several little chapels are scattered round, dedicated to particular gods, distinguished by different names, and some of them too presiding over different fountains. For, besides the principal one, which is, as it were, the parent of all the rest, there are several other lesser streams, which taking their rise from various sources, lose themselves in the river; over which a bridge is built, that separates the sacred part from that which lies open to common use. Vessels are allowed to come above this bridge, but no person is permitted to swim, * except below it. The Hispellates, to whom Augustus gave this place, furnish a public bath, and likewise entertain all strangers, at their own expense. Several villas, attracted by the beauty of this river, are situated upon its borders. In short, every object that presents itself, will afford you entertainment. You may also amuse yourself with numberless inscriptions that are fixed upon the pillars and walls by different persons, celebrating the virtues of the fountain, and the divinity that presides over it. There are many of them you will greatly admire, as there are some that will make you laugh; but I must correct myself when I say so; you are too humane, I know, to laugh upon such an occasion. Farewell.

* The touch of a naked body was thought to pollute these consecrated waters, as appears from a passage in Tacitus, l. 14. ann. c. 22.

Epist. IX. PLINY to URSUS.

A Long time has passed since I have taken either a book, or a pen in my hand. A long time has passed since I have known the sweets of leisure and repose; since I have known, in short, that indolent, but agreeable situation of doing nothing, and being nothing: so much have the affairs of my friends engaged me, and prevented me from enjoying the pleasures of retirement and contemplation. There is no sort of studies, however, of consequence enough to supersede the duty of friendship: on the contrary, it is a sacred tie which they themselves teach us most religiously to preserve. Farewell.

*Epist. X. PLINY to FABATUS *.*

YOur concern to hear of my wife's miscarriage, will be equal, I know, to the earnest desire you have, that we should make you a great-grandfather. The inexperience of her youth rendered her ignorant that she was breeding; so that she not only neglected the proper precautions, but managed herself in a way extremely unsuitable to a person in her circumstances. But she has severely atoned for her mistake, by the utmost hazard of her life. Though you should (as most certainly you will) be afflicted to see yourself thus disappointed in your old age, of the immediate hopes of leaving a family behind you; yet it deserves your gratitude to the gods, that in the preservation of your grand-daughter, you have still reason to expect that blessing: an expectation so much the more certain, as she has given this proof, though an unhappy one indeed, of her being capable of bearing children. These, at least,

* His wife's grandfather.

are the reflections by which I endeavour to confirm my own hopes, and comfort myself under my present disappointment. You cannot more ardently wish to have great-grandchildren, than I do to have children, as the dignity of both our families seems to open to them a sure road to honours, and we shall leave them the glory of descending from a long race of ancestors, whose fame is as extensive as their nobility is ancient. May we but have the pleasure of seeing them born, it will make us amends for the present disappointment ! Farewell.

*Epist. XI. PLINY to HISPULLA *.*



WHen I reflect upon your affection to your brother's daughter, an affection even exceeding the tenderness of a mother, I think I ought in the first place to inform you of her recovery, before I tell you she has been ill ; that the sentiments of joy at the one, may leave you no leisure to be afflicted at the other. Though I fear indeed, after your first transports of gratulation are over, you will feel some concern, and in the midst of your joy for the danger she has escaped, will tremble at the thought of that which she has undergone. She is now, however, in good spirits, and again restored to herself and to me ; as she is making the same progress in the recovery of her strength and health, that she did in the loss of them. To say the truth, (and I may now safely tell it you), she was in the utmost hazard of her life ; not indeed from any fault of her own, but a little from the inexperience of her youth. To this must be imputed the cause of her miscarriage, and the sad experience she has had of the consequence of not knowing she was breed-

* His wife's aunt.

ing. But though this misfortune has deprived you of the consolation of a nephew, or niece, to supply the loss of your brother; you must remember that blessing seems rather to be deferred than denied, since her life is preserved from whom that happiness is to be expected. I entreat you then to represent this accident to your * father in the most favourable light; as your sex are the best advocates in cases of this kind. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to MINUTIANUS.

I Must excuse myself to you this one day: Titinius Capito is to recite a performance of his, and I know not whether it is most my inclination, or my duty to attend him. He is a man of a most amiable disposition, and justly to be numbered among the brightest ornaments of our age: he studiously cultivates the polite arts himself, and generously admires and encourages them in others. To several who have distinguished themselves by their compositions, he has been the defence, the refuge, and the reward; as he affords a glorious model and example to all in general. In a word, he is the restorer and reformer of learning, now alas! well nigh grown obsolete and decayed. His house is open to every man of genius who has any works to rehearse; and it is not there alone that he attends these assemblies with the most obliging good nature. I am sure at least he never once excused himself from mine, if he happened to be at Rome. I should therefore with a more than ordinary ill grace refuse to return him the same favour, as the occasion of doing it is peculiarly glorious. Should not I think myself obliged to a man, who, if I were engaged in any law-suit, generously attended the

* Fabatus, grandfather to Calphurnia, Pliny's wife.
cause

cause in which I was interested? And am I less indebted, now that my whole care and business is of the literary kind, for his assiduity in my concerns of this sort? a point which, if not the only, is however the principal instance wherein I can be obliged. But though I owed him no return of this nature; though I were not engaged to him by the reciprocal tie of the same good offices he has done me; yet not only the beauty of his extensive genius, as polite as it is severely correct, but the dignity of his subject, would strongly incite me to be of his audience. He has written an account of the deaths of several illustrious persons, some of which were my particular friends. It is a pious office then, it should seem, as I could not be present at their obsequies, to attend, at least, this (as I may call it) their funeral oration; which though a late, is however, for that reason, a more unsuspected tribute to their memories. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY TO GENIALIS.

I AM much pleased that you have read my orations in company with your father. It is highly for your advantage to learn from a man of his eloquence, what to admire in compositions of this kind, and what to condemn; as you will at the same time be trained up in an habitual custom of speaking your real sentiments. You see whose steps it is you ought to follow; and happy are you in having a living example before you, which is at once the nearest and the noblest model you can pursue! In a word, that he whom nature designed you should most resemble, is, of all others, the person whom you should most imitate. Farewell.

Epist. XIV. PLINY TO ARISTO.

AS you are no less a perfect master of the political laws of your country (which include the customs and usages of the senate) than of the civil, I am particularly desirous to have your opinion, whether I was mistaken in an affair which lately came before the house. This I request, not with a view of being directed in my judgment as to what is past, (for that is now too late), but in order to know how to conduct myself, if any case of the same nature should hereafter arise. You will ask, perhaps, why I apply to you for information concerning a point, wherein I ought to be well instructed? But the tyranny of former reigns, as it introduced a neglect and ignorance of all other parts of useful knowledge, so particularly of what relates to the customs of the senate; for who is there so tamely industrious as to desire to learn, what he can never have an opportunity of putting in practice? Besides, it is not very easy to retain even the knowledge one has acquired, where no occasion of exercising it occurs. Hence it was, that Liberty, at her return, found us in the utmost ignorance and inexperience; and thus, in the warmth of our eagerness to taste the sweets, we are sometimes hurried on to action, ere we are well informed in what manner we ought to act. But by the institution of our ancestors it was wisely provided, that the young should learn from the old, not only by precept, but by their own observation, how to behave in that sphere, wherein they were one day themselves to move; as these, in their turn, transmitted the same method of instruction to their children. Upon this principle it was, that the youth were sent early into the army, that by being taught to obey, they might learn to command, and whilst they followed others,

thers, might be trained up by degrees to be leaders themselves. And thus, when they were candidates for any office, they were obliged to stand at the entrance of the senate, that they might be spectators, before they were admitted parties in the public council of the empire. The father of each youth was his instructor upon these occasions, or if he had none, some person of years and dignity supplied the place of a father. Thus they were taught by that surest method of discipline, example, how far the right of proposing any law to the senate extended; what privileges a senator had in delivering his opinion in the house; the power of the magistrates in that assembly, and the rights of the rest of the members; where it is proper to yield, and where to insist; when and how long to speak, and when to be silent; how to distinguish and separate contrary opinions *, and how to improve upon a former motion: in a word, they learned by this means, whatever relates to the conduct of a man as a member of the senate. As for myself, it is true indeed, I served in the army when I was a youth; but it was at a time when courage was suspected, and cowardice honoured; when the generals were without authority, and the soldiers without modesty; when there were neither discipline nor obedience, but all was riot, disorder, and confusion; in short, when it was happier to forget, than remember what one learned. I attended likewise in my youth the senate, but a senate that was mute and dispirited; where it was

* If any opinion proposed to the senate, was thought too general, and to include several distinct articles, some of which might be approved, and others rejected, it was usual to require that it might be divided; and this they sometimes did by a general voice of the assembly, crying out *Divide, divide*. Middlet. Treat. on the Roman senate. 137.

dangerous to speak one's sentiments, and infamous to be silent. What satisfaction in learning, or indeed what could be learned, when the senate sat in the utmost indolence, or acted with the highest infamy! when they were convened either for cruel or ridiculous purposes*; and when their deliberations were never serious, though often sad. But I was not only a witness to this scene of wretchedness, as a spectator; I bore my share of it too as a senator, and both saw and suffered under it for many years; which so broke and damped my spirits, that they have not even yet been able fully to recover themselves. It is but a short time (and it seems so much the shorter in proportion to its happiness) since we could take any pleasure in knowing what relates to, or in exercising the duties of our station. Upon these considerations, therefore, I may reasonably entreat you, in the first place, to pardon my error, (if I have been guilty of one), and in the next, to guide me out of it by your superior knowledge: for I am sensible you have ever been curious to examine into the constitution of your country, both with respect to its public and private, its ancient and modern, its general and particular laws. I am persuaded indeed the point upon

* The fourth satire of Juvenal will serve as a comment upon this passage, where he acquaints us that a turbot of a most enormous size being brought to Domitian, he immediately convened the senate, in order to consult in what manner it should be dressed. The poet mentions the names of the persons who spoke in this remarkable debate, and their several opinions upon a question so important, concluding his satire with this pathetic wish:

*Alas! as this day, that he had spent the rest,
And his dire reign had only been a jest!
Nor Rome her noblest blood had tamely seen
Flow unreveng'd! —*

Sat. 4.
which

which I am going to consult you, is so unusual, that even those whose great experience in public business must have made them, one should imagine, acquainted with every thing of this nature, were either not thoroughly apprised, or absolutely ignorant of it. I shall be more excusable, therefore, if I happen to have been mistaken; as you will gain so much the higher applause, if you can set me right in an affair, which it is not clear has ever yet fallen within your observation. The inquiry then before the house was, concerning the death of Afranius Dexter, who being found murdered, it was uncertain whether he fell by his own hands, or by those of his freedmen; and if the latter, whether they committed the fact in * obedience to the commands of Afranius, or were prompted to it by their own villany. After they had been put to the question, a certain senator (it is of no importance to mention his name, but if you are desirous to know, it was myself) was for acquitting them; another proposed that they should be banished for a limited time; and a third, that they should be put to death. These several opinions were so extremely opposite, that it was impossible either of them could stand with the other; and therefore, in taking the voices, I thought they ought to be numbered separately. For what is there in common between the sentiments of those who thought the accused deserved banishment, and those who were of opinion they merited death? Nothing more, in truth, than there is between those who voted for banishment, and the others who were for acquit-

* Those who destroyed themselves, frequently made use of the hands of their servants for that purpose. Thus Brutus and Cassius, after the loss of that fatal battle which decided the liberties of Rome, ran each of them upon the swords of their attendants. Florus, l. 4. c. 7.

ting the prisoners. Though indeed he who was for discharging them, approached nearer to the sentiments of him who proposed exile, than the other who moved that they should suffer death : for both the former agreed at least in this, that their lives should be spared, whereas the latter were for a capital conviction. In the mean while, those senators who were for punishing with death, and those who proposed banishment, sat together on the same side of the house ; and thus, by a present appearance of union, suspended their real disagreement. I moved therefore, that each of the three opinions should be separately counted, and that two of them should not, under favour of a short truce between themselves, join against the third. I insisted that such of the members as were for capital punishment, should divide from the others who voted for banishment ; and that these two distinct parties should not be permitted to form themselves into a body, in opposition to those who declared for acquittal, when they would immediately after disunite again : for it was not material that they agreed in disliking one proposal, since they differed with respect to the other two. It seemed very extraordinary, that he who moved the freedmen should be banished, and the slaves suffer death, should not be allowed to join these two in one motion, but that the question should be ordered to be put to the house in the disjunctive ; and yet that the votes of those who were for inflicting capital punishment upon the freedmen, should be taken together with those who were for banishing them. For if, in the former instance, it was reasonable that the motion should be divided, because it comprehended two distinct things ; I could not see why, in the latter case, suffrages so extremely different should be thrown into the same scale. Permit me then, notwithstanding the point is determined,

determined, to go over it again as if it were still undecided, and to lay before you those reasons at my ease, which I offered to the house in the midst of much interruption and clamour. Let us suppose there had been only three judges appointed to hear this cause, one of which was of opinion that the parties in question deserved death; the other, that they should only be banished; and the third, that they ought to be acquitted: should the two former unite their strength to the destruction of the latter? or should each of them separately be balanced? For the first and second are no more compatible than the second and third. They ought therefore in the same manner to be counted in the senate as contrary, since they were delivered as different opinions. Suppose the same person had moved, that they should both have been banished and put to death; could they possibly, in pursuance of this opinion, have suffered both punishments? Or could it have been esteemed as one consistent motion, when it united two such different things? Why then should the same opinion, when delivered by distinct persons, be considered as one and entire, which would not be deemed so if it were proposed by a single person? Does not the law manifestly imply, that a distinction is to be made between those who are for a capital conviction, and those who are for banishment, in the very form of words made use of when the house is ordered to divide? *You who are of such an opinion, come to this side; you who are of any other, go over to the side of him whose opinion you follow.* Let us examine this form, and weigh every sentence: *You who are of this opinion;* that is, for instance, you who are for banishment, *come on this side;* namely, on the side of him who moved for banishment. From whence it is clear he cannot remain on the side of those who are for death.

You

You who are for any other: observe, the law is not contented with barely saying another, but she adds any. Now, can there be a doubt, whether they who declare for a capital conviction are of any other opinion, than those who propose exile? *Go over to the side of him whose opinion you follow:* does not the law seem, as it were, to force those who are of different sentiments, to contrary sides? Does not the consul himself point out, not only by this solemn form of words, but by his hand and gesture, the place in which every man is to remain, or to which he is to go over? "But," it is objected, "if this separation is made between those who vote for inflicting death, and those who are on the side of exile, the opinion for quitting the prisoners must necessarily prevail." But how does that affect the parties who vote? Certainly it becomes not them to contend by every art, and urge every expedient, that the milder sentence may not take place. "Still," say they, "those who are for condemning the accused either capitally or to banishment, should be first set in opposition to those who are for absolving them, and afterwards weighed against each other." Thus as, in certain public games, some are by lot to engage with the conqueror; for, it seems, in the senate there is a first and second combat, and of two different sentiments, the prevailing one has still a third to contend with. What? when any particular opinion is received, do not all the rest fall of course? Is it reasonable then, that one should be thrown into the scale merely to weigh down another? To express my meaning more plainly: unless the two parties, who are for capital punishment and exile immediately separate upon the first division of the house, it would be to no purpose afterwards to dissent from those with whom they joined before.--But I am dictating instead
of

of receiving instruction. Tell me then whether you think these votes should have been taken separately? My sentiments, it is true, prevailed, nevertheless I am desirous to know whether you think I ought to have insisted upon this point, or have yielded as that member did who declared for capital punishment? For convinced, I will not say of the legality, however of the equity of my proposal, he receded from his own opinion, and went over to the party for exile: fearing perhaps, if the votes were taken separately (which he saw would be the case), the freedmen would be acquitted: for the numbers were far greater on that side than on either of the other two, separately counted. The consequence was, that those who had been influenced by his authority, when they saw themselves forsaken by his going over to the other party, gave up a motion which they found abandoned by the first author, and deserted, as it were, with their leader. Thus the three opinions were resolved at length into two; and of those two, one prevailed, and the other was rejected; while the third, as it was not powerful enough to conquer both the others, had only to chuse to which of the two it would yield. Farewell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to JUNIOR.

BY sending you such a number of volumes at once, I doubt I have overburdened you: but if I have, remember you required them of me. Besides, as you wrote me word you were likely to reap but little from the fruits of your vineyards, I imagined you would be at leisure to reap (as we say) the fruits of learning. I have received the same bad accounts of my own little farms; and am myself therefore at full leisure to write books for you, provided I can but raise money

money enough to furnish me with good paper. For should I be reduced to the coarse and spongy sort, either I must not write at all, or whatever I compose, whether good or bad, must necessarily undergo one cruel blot! Farewell.

Epist. XVI. PLINY TO PATERNUS.

THE sickness which has lately run through my family, and carried off several of my domestics, some of them too in the prime of their years, has deeply afflicted me. I have two consolations, however, which though they are not equal to so considerable a grief, still they are consolations. One is, that as I have always very readily manumized my slaves, their death does not seem altogether immature, if they lived long enough to receive their freedom: the other, that I have allowed them to make a kind of will*, which I observe as religiously as if they were legally entitled to that privilege. I receive and obey their last requests, as so many authoritative commands, suffering them to dispose of their effects to whom they please; with this single restriction, that they leave them to some in my family, which to persons in their station is to be esteemed as a sort of commonwealth. But though I endeavour to acquiesce under these reflections, yet the same tenderness which led me to shew them these indulgences, still breaks out and overpowers my strongest resolutions. However, I could not wish to be insensible to these soft impressions of humanity: though the generality of the world, I know, look upon losses of this kind in no other view, than as a diminution of their property, and fancy by cherishing such an

* A slave could acquire no property, and consequently was incapable by law of making a will.

unfeeling

unfeeling temper, they discover a superior fortitude and good sense. Their wisdom and magnanimity I shall not dispute. But manly, I am sure, they are not; for it is the very criterion of true manhood to feel those impressions of sorrow which it endeavours to resist; and to admit, not to be above the want of consolation. But perhaps I have detained you too long upon this subject, — though not so long as I would. There is a certain pleasure in giving vent to one's grief; especially when we pour out our sorrow in the bosom of a friend, who will approve, or at least, pardon our tears *. Farewell.

Epist.

* There is something so uncommonly amiable in this family-piece, that the reader cannot be displeased with being stopped a moment to take a second view of it. If nothing remained of Pliny, but this single trait of his character, we might nevertheless assuredly pronounce of him, that he was ennobled by every social virtue: for as it is certain the greatest minds have ever been most open to impressions of the humane kind; so every moral virtue necessarily flows from benevolence, as from its true and genuine source. It is impossible a man who has a just feeling of the calamities of others, can deliberately break through the moral ties of any kind; because it is certain he cannot do so, without being the occasion of suffering to those who stand within the influence of the particular action. This principle also will ever afford the most unerring test of patriotism, or the public affections; for the cruel and unrelenting in private and domestic life, can never act upon the true notion of liberty, in the more enlarged relations of public concerns. With great justice therefore our author makes this generous principle the evidence of real manhood; as Juvenal describes a tenderness of disposition to be the principal note of distinction, which nature has marked out between the rational and brute creation:

Heaven

Epist. XVII. PLINY to MACRINUS.

IS the season with you as inclement and tempestuous as it is with us? All here is tempest and inundation. The Tiber has swelled its channel, and overflowed its banks far and wide. Though the wise precaution of the emperor had guarded against this evil, by cutting several outlets to the river; it has nevertheless flooded all the fields and valleys, and entirely overspread the whole face of the flat country. It seems to have gone out to meet those rivers which it used to receive and carry off in one intermingled stream; and has driven them back to deluge those countries it could not reach itself. That most delightful of rivers, the Anio, which seems invited and detained in its course by the charming villas that are situated upon its banks, has almost entirely rooted up and carried away the woods which shaded its borders. It has overthrown whole mountains, and in endeavouring to find a passage through the ruins that obstructed its way, has forced down houses, and rises over the desolation it has occasioned. The inhabitants of the hill countries, who are situated above the reach of this inundation, have been the melancholy spectators of its dreadful effects, having seen costly furniture, instruments of husbandry, ploughs, and oxen with their drivers, whole herds of cattle, together with the trunks of trees, and beams of the neighbouring villas, floating about

*Heaven gave the tear humane, a sign confess,
Soft pity dwells within the mortal breast;
That noblest passion noblest bosoms know! —
Turn'd ever virtue from another's woe?
'Tis man's great privilege, the glorious line
That marks from brute, the human soul divine.*

Sat. xv. 131.

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in different parts. Nor indeed have these higher places themselves, to which the waters could not rise, escaped the calamity. A continued heavy rain as destructive as the river itself, poured down in torrents upon them, and has destroyed all the inclosures which divided that fertile country. It has damaged likewise, and even overturned some of the public buildings, where numbers have been miserably buried in the ruins. And thus those people, besides the loss of their effects, have suffered the additional misfortune of lamenting their friends. I am extremely uneasy lest this extensive ruin should have spread to you: I beg therefore, if it has not, you will immediately ease me of my fears. And indeed I desire you would inform me though it should; for the difference is not great between fearing a danger, and feeling it; except that the evil one feels has some bounds, whereas one's apprehensions have none. For we can suffer no more than what actually has, but we fear all that possibly may have happened. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY to RUFINUS.

THE vulgar imagination is most certainly false, that a man's will is a kind of mirror wherein one may clearly see his genuine character. We have a late instance to the contrary in Domitius Tullus, who appears a much better man since his death, than during his life. After having artfully encouraged the expectations of those who paid court to him, with a view to being his heir, he has left his estate to his niece whom he adopted. He has given likewise several very considerable legacies among his grandchildren, and also to his great-grandson. In a word, he has shewn himself a kind relation throughout his whole will: which is so much the more to be

admired, as it was not expected of him. This affair has been much the subject of conversation; some represent him as guilty of the basest falsehood and ingratitude; and while they thus complain of him as if they were actually disinherited kindred, their invectives betray their own dishonest designs: others, on the contrary, applaud him extremely for having disappointed the hopes of this infamous tribe of men, whom, considering the manners of the age, it is but prudence to deceive. They add further, that he was not at liberty to make any other will, and that he cannot so properly be said to have left, as returned, his estate to his adopted daughter, since it was by her means it came to him. For Curtilius Mancianus, whose daughter Domitius Lucanus, brother to this Tullus, married, having taken a dislike to his son-in-law, devised his estate to this young lady, (who was the issue of that marriage), upon condition that Lucanus, her father, would * emancipate her. He accordingly did so, but she being afterwards adopted by Tullus her uncle,

* That is, would make her free: for the power of a father over his children, was unlimited amongst the Romans. It extended not only to their fortunes, but their lives, and was even greater than what the laws allowed over their slaves; for if a master sold his slave, who afterwards obtained his freedom, the former owner had no farther claim; whereas, in the case of a son, the father's right was not absolutely extinguished by selling him, but if the son obtained his freedom, he again came under his dominion. And this authority could not be wholly disannulled till the son had been thrice sold, and as often recovered his liberty, and then it entirely ceased. The law vested the same power likewise as fully in the adoptive father, as in the natural. Justinian observes this authority was peculiar to the Romans, and followed by no other nation whatsoever. *In 2. l. 1.*

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the design of Mancian's will was entirely frustrated. For these two brothers having never divided their patrimony, but living together as joint-tenants of one common estate, the daughter of Lucanus, notwithstanding the act of emancipation, returned back again, together with her fortune, under the dominion of her father, by means of this fraudulent adoption. It seems indeed to have been the fate of these two brothers, to be enriched by those who had the greatest aversion to them. For Domitius Afer, by whom they were adopted, left a will in their favour, which he had made eighteen years before his death; though it was plain he had altered his sentiments with respect to the family, because he was instrumental in procuring the confiscation of their father's estate. There is something, in truth, extremely singular in the resentment of Afer, and the good fortune of the other two; as it was very extraordinary on one hand, that Domitius should endeavour to extirpate from the privileges of society, a man whose children he had adopted, and on the other, that these brothers should find a parent in the very person that ruined their father. But it was highly just in Tullus, after having been appointed sole heir by his brother, in prejudice to his own daughter, to make her amends by giving her this estate which came to him from Afer, as well as all the rest which he possessed in common with his brother. His will therefore deserves the highest applause, as it is the dictates of nature, justice, and honour; wherein he has returned his obligations to his several relations, according to their respective good offices towards him. He has made a just acknowledgment likewise to his wife, having bequeathed to that excellent woman, who patiently endured much upon his account, several delightful villas, besides a large sum of money. And indeed she

deserved so much the more at his hands, as she was highly censured for her marriage with him. It was thought unworthy a person of her rank and merit, after having had a former husband by whom she had issue, to marry, in the decline of her life, an old man, merely for his riches, who was so sickly and infirm, that even though he had passed the best years of his youth and health with her, she might well have been weary of him. He had so entirely lost the use of all his limbs, that he could not move himself in bed without assistance; and all the enjoyment he had of his riches, was only to contemplate them. He was even reduced to the wretched necessity (which indeed one cannot mention without loathing as well as lamenting) of having his teeth washed and cleansed by others: and he used frequently to say, when he was complaining of the indecencies which his infirmities obliged him to suffer, that he was every day forced to take his servant's fingers into his mouth. Still, however, he lived, and was willing to accept of life upon these terms; the preservation of which was particularly owing to the care of his wife, who, whatever reputation she might lose at first by her marriage, acquired great honour by her after-conduct towards him. — Thus I have given you all the news of the town, where nothing is talked of but Tullus. It is expected his curiosities will shortly be sold by auction. He had such vast numbers of fine statues, which stood neglected in a lumber-room, that he actually filled a large garden with them, the very same day he purchased it. — If you have any thing worth communicating in return, I hope you will not refuse the trouble of writing to me; not only as we are all naturally fond of news, but because example has a very beneficial influence upon our own conduct. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

I Find both entertainment and comfort in my studies: and as there is no pleasure I prefer to them, so there is no uneasiness they do not alleviate. In this season therefore of dejection, occasioned by the indisposition of my wife, the dangerous sickness of some of my servants, and the death of others, I fly to my books, those sovereign composers of my grief. It is true, indeed, they teach me a greater sensibility to misfortunes, but they teach me too how to bear them with more patience. It is an established rule with me, before I publish any of my productions, to take the judgment of my friends upon them, especially yours. I beg therefore you would examine the performance I here send you, with particular care, as I am afraid, the disquietude of my mind may have prevented me from giving it the attention I ought. For though I could command myself so far as to sit down to write, I was not master enough of my heart, to do so with ease and cheerfulness: but if study throws the mind into a pleasing state of serenity, a state of serenity is necessary to throw a grace upon our studies. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY to GALLUS.

WE undertake long voyages both by sea and land, to behold those curiosities, which, if they lie within our reach, we overlook and neglect: whether it be that we are naturally less inquisitive concerning those things which are near us, while we are pushed forward in pursuit of remote objects; or because the easiness of gratifying a desire, is always sure to damp it; or, perhaps, that we defer from time to time

viewing, what we know we have an opportunity of seeing when we please. Whatever the reason be, it is certain there are several rarities in and near Rome, which we have not only never seen, but even never so much as heard of: and yet if they had been the produce of Greece, or Egypt, or Asia, or any other country which we admire as fruitful in wonders, they would long since have been the subject both of our conversation and inspection. For myself at least, I confess, I have lately been entertained with one of these curiosities, to which I was an entire stranger before. My wife's grandfather desired I would look upon his estate near Ameria. As I was walking over his grounds, I was shewn a lake that lies below them, called Vadimon, which I was informed had several very extraordinary qualities attending it. This raised my curiosity to take a nearer view. It is formed exactly circular; there is not the least obliquity or winding, but all is regular, and even as if it had been hollowed and cut out by the hand of art. The colour of its water is clearer than that of the sea, though of a deeper green; it seems by its taste and smell impregnated with sulphur, and is esteemed of great efficacy in all fractures of the limbs, which it is supposed to consolidate. Though it is but of a moderate extent, yet the winds have a great effect upon it, throwing it into violent commotions. No vessels are suffered to sail here, as its waters are held sacred; but several floating* islands swim about it, covered with reeds and rushes, and whatever other plants the neighbouring

* The credit of this account does not rest entirely upon our author: Pliny the elder mentions these floating islands, [l. 2. 95.], and so does Seneca, who accounts for them upon philosophical principles. [Q. N. l. 3. 25.]. Varenus says, that in Honduras, a province

bouring marsh and the borders of the lake produce. These islands differ in their size and shape; but the edges of all of them are worn away by their frequent collision against the shore and one another. They have equally the same height and motion; as their respective roofs, which are formed like the keel of a boat, may be seen hanging down in the water, on whichever side you stand. Sometimes they move in a cluster, and seem to form one entire little continent; sometimes they are dispersed into different quarters by the winds; at other times, when it is calm, they float up and down separately. You may frequently see one of the larger islands sailing along with a lesser joined to it, like a ship with its longboat: or perhaps, seeming to strive which shall outswim the other: then again they all assemble in one station, and by joining themselves to the shore, sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other, make the lake appear considerably less, till at last uniting in the centre they restore it to its usual size. The sheep which graze upon the borders of this lake, frequently go upon these islands to feed, without perceiving that they have left the shore, till they are alarmed by finding themselves surrounded with water; and in the same manner when the wind drives them back again, they return without being sensible that they are landed. This lake empties itself into a river, which after running a little way sinks under ground, and if any

province in Amerca, there is a lake in which are several little hills planted with shrubs, &c. tossed up and down by the winds. And he quotes Boethius the Scotch historian, who affirms that in a large *loch*, called *Lomond Loch*, in Scotland, there is a floating island, upon which cattle graze. See Varen. Geogr. vol. 1. p. 412.

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thing is thrown in, brings it up again where the stream emerges. — I have given you this account, because I imagined it would not be less new, nor less agreeable to you than it was to me; as I know you take the same pleasure as myself, in contemplating the works of nature. Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY TO ARRIANUS.

AS in life, so in studies, according to my opinion, nothing is more amiable, and more agreeable to society, than to temper gravity with gaiety, lest the former should degenerate into austereness, and the latter run up into levity. Upon this maxim it is, that I diversify my more serious works with compositions of a lighter nature. I had chosen a convenient place and season for some productions of that sort to make their appearance in; and designing to accustom them early to the tables of the idle, I fixed upon the month of July, when the courts of justice are as usually shut up, in order to read them to some of my friends at supper; and accordingly I placed a desk before each of my guests. But as I happened that morning to be unexpectedly called away to attend a cause, I took occasion to preface my recital with an apology. I entreated my audience not to impute it to me as any want of due regard for the business to which I had invited them, that on the very day I had appropriated to read my performances to some of my friends, (though indeed but few), I did not abstain from serving others in the affairs of the bar. I assured them I would observe the same rule in my writings, and should always give the preference to points of importance, before those of entertainment; to serious subjects, before gay ones; and to my friends, before myself. The poems I recited consisted of a variety of subjects, in different

ferent measures. It is by such arts as these, we who dare not rely upon the single force of our genius, endeavour to avoid giving our readers a satiety. In compliance with the earnest solicitation of my audience, I recited for two days successively; but not in the manner that several practise, by passing over the less shining passages, and making a merit of so doing: on the contrary, I omitted nothing, and freely owned that I did not. I read the whole, that I might correct the whole; which it is impossible those who only select particular passages, should do. The latter method, indeed, may have the more appearance of modesty, and perhaps respect; but the former shews greater simplicity, as well as more affection towards the audience. For the belief that a man's friends have so much regard to him, as not to be weary upon these occasions, is a sure indication of his own love for them. To say the truth, one has little obligation to an audience, if they assemble merely with a view to their own entertainment. He who had rather find his friend's performance correct, than make it so, is to be considered as a stranger, or one who is too indolent to give himself any trouble. Your affection for me leaves me no room to doubt, that you are impatient to read my book; which is yet however not ripe for your perusal. You shall do so, when I have corrected it; which was indeed the design of my recital. You are already acquainted with some parts of it; but even those, after they have been polished, (or perhaps spoiled, as is sometimes the case by too frequent corrections), will seem new to you. For when a composition has undergone various changes, it contracts an air of novelty even in those parts which remain unaltered. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XXII. PLINY TO GEMINIUS.

DID you never observe a certain set of people, who though they are themselves slaves to every vice, shew a kind of malicious resentment against the errors of others; and are most severe upon those whom they most resemble? yet, surely, a lenity of disposition, even in persons who have the least occasion for clemency themselves, is of all other virtues the most becoming. The highest of all characters, in my estimation, is his, who is ready to pardon the errors of mankind, as if he were every day guilty of some himself; and at the same time as cautious of committing a fault, as if he never forgave one. It is a rule then which we should upon all occasions, both private and public, most religiously observe, “to be inexorable to our own failings, while we “treat those of the rest of the world with tenderness, not excepting even such as forgive none “but themselves;” remembering always what the humane, and, therefore, as well as upon other accounts, the great Thrasea used frequently to say: * *He who hates vice, hates mankind.* You

* The meaning of this maxim seems to be, that, as it is extremely difficult to separate the action from the man, we should not suffer the errors of the world to raise in us that acrimony of indignation, which if well examined, perhaps, will be oftener found to proceed from some secret principle of malice, than a just abhorrence of vice; *Satius est* (as Seneca observes) *publicos mores et humana vitia, placide accipere*; a general philanthropy and universal benevolence being the most genuine marks, by which virtue distinguishes those who are truly in her interest. If this sense is admitted, there will be no need to suppose (as some of the commentators have) that any mistake is crept into the text.

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will ask me, perhaps, who it is that has given occasion to these reflections? You must know a certain person lately—but of that when we meet—though, upon second thoughts, not even then, lest whilst I condemn and expose his conduct, I should act counter to that maxim I particularly recommend. Whoever therefore, and whatever he is, shall remain in silence: for though there may be some use, perhaps, in setting a mark upon the man, for the sake of example; there will be more, however, in sparing him, for the sake of humanity. Farewell.

Epist. XXIII. PLINY to MARCELLINUS.

MY extreme grief for the death of Junius Avitus, has rendered me incapable of business, study, or amusement. He was invested with the laticlave in my house; as in all the honours he solicited, he was constantly assisted by my interest. I will add too, his affection and esteem for me were so great, that he formed his manners, and regulated his conduct by my guidance and direction: a disposition extremely uncommon in the youth of this age; for who among them will deign to submit to the experience and authority of their superiors? They think themselves at once in full possession of all wisdom and knowledge; and without revering or imitating the virtues of any, imagine they are a sufficient example to themselves. But Avitus was of a far different turn; he shewed his wisdom, in believing there were some who had more; and discovered his knowledge, in his desire to learn. He was ever consulting his friends upon some point relating to his studies, or his conduct; and he always returned from them with advantage, either by the advice he received, or the disposition he shewed. With what respect
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did he treat Servianus, one of the most accomplished men of the age? Avitus knew how to value such uncommon merit, as well as to endear himself to him in his turn. Accordingly when Servianus went lieutenant from Germany into Pannonia, he attended him as tribune; not so much in the character of his fellow-officer, as of his friend and admirer. With what care and integrity did he execute the office of quæstor under several consuls, who all esteemed him, not only as an useful and experienced officer, but as a pleasing and agreeable companion? With what industry and application did he solicit this very ædileship, from the enjoyment of which he is now prematurely snatched? a reflection that gives a peculiar poignancy to my affliction for the loss of him. His unavailing labours, his fruitless solicitations, and the honour which he merited only, not enjoyed, are for ever in my thoughts. The circumstance of his having first put on the laticlave under my roof; the first and the last suffrage I ever gave him; the conversations we have had, and the consultations we have held, all return fresh upon my mind. I am struck with the most tender sorrow when I consider his youth, and reflect upon the irreparable loss his family has sustained: an aged parent, a young wife to whom he had not been married much above a year; an infant daughter just born; so many pleasing hopes, so many tender joys, all reserved and destroyed in one day! When he was just elected ædile; when he was lately commenced a bridegroom; when he was newly made a father, he was taken from the midst of these enjoyments, and has left behind him an honour untasted, a mother inconsolable, a widowed wife, and an orphan infant, who will have the misfortune of never having known her father! But what increases my tears upon this melancholy

melancholy occasion is, that being absent when this accident happened, I never knew of his sickness, till I heard of his death, and had no time to prepare myself for this cruel stroke, by previously apprehending it! — Such is the present distress of my mind! — You must not wonder then that it is the whole subject of my letter; for I am not able at present to think or talk of any thing else. Farewell.

Epist. XXIV. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

THE affection I profess to have for you, obliges me, not indeed to direct you, (for you are far above the want of a guide), but to remind you, however, of what you already know, and to admonish you carefully to observe and resolutely put in practice; that is, in other words, to know it to all the more useful purposes of knowledge. You will consider yourself as sent to that noble province, Achaia, the real and genuine Greece, where politeness, learning, and even agriculture itself, are supposed to have taken their first rise; as sent to govern a state composed of free cities; that is, to a society of men who breathe the spirit of true manhood and liberty *; who maintained the right they received from

* It is remarkable, that even after Greece was absorbed in the Roman empire, and became a province to it under the name of Achaia, it did not lose, with its power and sovereignty, that lively sense and love of liberty, which was the peculiar character of that people, amongst whom the arts were produced and brought to perfection. The Romans, when they had subdued Greece, left that generous, brave, polite people, in possession of many of their rights and privileges. And they maintained such an ardent zeal for liberty, that, to name no other instances of

from nature, by courage, by virtue, by alliances; in a word, by civil and religious faith. You will revere the gods and heroes their founders; you will respect their ancient glory, and even their very age, which as it is venerable in men, in states it is sacred. You will honour them therefore for their antiquity, and for those

it, when the civil wars happened in Italy, the Athenians very warmly espoused the party of Pompey, who fought for the republic: and after Cæsar was killed, they erected statues in honour of Brutus and Cassius, near to those of Hermodius and Aristogiton, their ancient deliverers. It was hence Greece, Athens in particular, after it was very much fallen and degenerated, continued still to be the metropolis of sciences, the school of all the fine arts, the standard and centre of good taste in all works of genius, to Cicero's time, and long afterwards; insomuch that Rome sent its most illustrious youth to be perfected there in polite literature, eloquence, philosophy, and all the ingenious arts and sciences; and the emperors who loved learning, if they could not go to Greece and become scholars there, as some of them did, brought Greece to them by inviting and receiving into their palaces its most celebrated professors and artists, and even intrusting the education of their children with Greek masters. Now, their continuing to excel in the arts and sciences, to what else can it be attributed, but to this, that with some small remains of liberty they retained the spirit of liberty, the love of it, and zeal for it? It was indeed in consequence of this alone, that they maintained, in some degree, even till Italy was quite over-run with barbarism, a sovereignty the Romans could not take from them; a sovereignty in science, arts, and good taste. It is impossible to account for it in any other way: they preserved the arts in a very great degree, because they retained the spirit of liberty in a very extraordinary one: *Turnbull on ancient painting,*

p. 100.

famous

famous deeds which are truly, nay for those which are fabulously recorded of them. You will indulge them in the full exercise of their dignity, their privileges, and even their very vanity. Remember it was from this nation we derived our * laws; that she did not receive ours by conquest, but gave us hers by favour. Remember it is Athens that you approach; it is Lacedæmon you govern; and to deprive such a glorious people of the declining shadow, the remaining name of liberty, would be a hardship, would be even a barbarity of the severest kind. Physicians, you see, though with respect to diseases there is no difference between freedom and slavery, yet treat persons of the former rank with more tenderness, than those of the latter. Reflect on the noble figure these cities once made; but so reflect, as not to despise them for what they now are. Far be pride and asperity from my friend; nor fear, by a proper condescension, to lay yourself open to contempt. Can he who is vested with the power and bears the ensigns of authority, can he fail of meeting with respect, unless by pursuing base and sordid measures, and first breaking through that awful reverence he owes to himself? Ill, believe me, is

* About the year of Rome 300, that is, 452 years before Christ, ambassadors were sent into Greece, to make a collection of such laws and customs as the wisdom of that polite people had established, particularly the famous ones of Solon. At their return, these laws were approved and confirmed, and, together with some additional ones, were engraven on ten tables of brass. Two other tables of laws were soon afterwards added to these, which, together with the former, went by the name of the *twelve tables*, and were looked upon as the fountain of all law, public and private. *Liv. l. 3. c. 31. Ferriere hist. des lois civ. c. 5.*

power experienced by injuries; ill can terror command veneration, and far more prevalent is affection in obtaining one's desires, than fear. For terror operates no longer than its object is present, but love produces its effects at a distance; and as absence changes the former into hatred, it raises the other into respect. It behoves you therefore, (and I cannot but repeat it again), it behoves you thoroughly to consider the end of your office, and to represent to yourself how great and important the task is of governing a free state. For what is more becoming to human nature than well-ordered government, or more valuable than liberty! How ignominious then must his conduct be, who turns the first into confusion, and the latter into slavery? To these considerations let me add, that you have an established reputation to maintain: the fame you acquired by the administration of the questorship in * Bithynia, the good opinion of the emperor, the credit you obtained when you were tribune and prætor, in a word, this very government, which may be looked upon as the reward of your former services, are all so many glorious weights which are incumbent upon you to support. So much the more therefore ought you to endeavour that it may not be said, you shewed greater humanity, integrity, and ability in a province remote from Rome, than in one which lies nearer to it; in the midst of a nation of slaves, than among a free people; that it may not be said, it was chance, and not judgment, appointed you to this office; that your character was unknown and unexperienced, not tried and approved. For (and it is a maxim which your reading and conversation must have often suggested to you) it is far worse to lose the fame one has acquired, than never to have attained it. I again beg you would be per-

* A province in Anatolia, or Asia the Less.

suaded,

suaded, that I did not write this letter with a design to instruct, but to remind you. Though indeed if I had, it would have only been in consequence of my affection for you: a point which I am in no apprehension of carrying beyond its just limits; for there cannot be any danger of excess where we ought to advance as far as possible. Farewell.

B O O K IX.

Epist. I. PLINY TO MAXIMUS.

I Have often advised you to publish, with as much expedition as possible, what you have written either in defence of yourself, or against Planta; or rather indeed (as the circumstances of the case demanded) what you drew up with both those views: but I particularly press this advice upon you now that I hear he is dead. For though you read this piece to several of your friends, and put it into the hands of others, yet I should regret extremely, that the world should suspect you only began after his death, what it is most certain you had finished during his life. Let not the character my friend has acquired of firmness and resolution be called in question. And it will not, when both the candid and the malicious world shall know, that the death of your adversary did not give you the confidence of composing, but only anticipated the opportunity of publishing this piece. And thus you will avoid the imputation,

*With impious joy to triumph o'er the dead *:*

For what you wrote and actually recited when he was yet alive, will be considered as published

* Hom. Od. lib. 22.

so too, provided you publish it soon. If therefore you have any other work upon your hands, let me entreat you to lay it aside, and give your last finishing touches to this performance. It seemed to me indeed, when I formerly read it, to want no improvements; and so it ought now to seem to you, as neither the thing itself requires, nor the time will admit of any farther delay. Farewell.

Epist. II. PLINY to SABINUS.

YOU oblige me extremely, in desiring that I would write to you very frequent and very long letters. If I have forborn to do so, it is partly in consideration of the important affairs in which you are employed; and partly from some very cold and uninteresting engagements of my own, which dissipate my thoughts, and at the same time damp my imagination. Besides, I have not a sufficient supply of matter for frequent letters; and am by no means in the same situation that Tully was, whom you point out to me as an example. He not only possessed a most enlarged genius, but the circumstances of the times wherein he lived, furnished him with a variety of noble occasions of exercising it. As for myself, you know (without my telling you) to what narrow limits I am confined, unless my letters were to turn upon the fictitious and pedantic topics of the schools. But when I consider you in the midst of arms and incampments, inflamed with martial music, or fatigued with toil and heat, how absurd would it be to talk to you upon such subjects? This is my apology, and I think a reasonable one; however, I almost wish you would not accept it: for to reject the excuses of a friend upon such an occasion, be they ever

ver so just, is an evident proof of a warm affection. Farewell.

Epist. III. PLINY to PAULINUS.

THough mankind differ in their notions of happiness; yet in my opinion it consists in the anticipation of an honest fame, and the conscious security of making a glorious figure in the eyes of posterity. I confess, if I had not the reward of an immortal reputation in view, I should prefer a life of uninterrupted ease and retirement, to any other. There seem to be but two points worthy our attention; either the endless duration of fame, or the short extent of life. Those who are governed by the former consideration, must pursue it with the full exertion of the most laborious efforts; while such as are influenced by the latter should quietly resign themselves to repose, nor wear out a short life in perishable pursuits: as some, we may observe, do, and then sink at last into contempt, in the midst of a wretched and fruitless course of false industry. These are my daily reflections, which I communicate to you, in order to renounce them, if you do not join with me in the same sentiments; as undoubtedly you will, who are forever meditating some glorious and immortal enterprise. Farewell.

Epist. IV. PLINY to MACRINUS.

I Should be under apprehensions you would think the oration which you receive with this letter, immoderately long, but that it is of such a nature as to require several breaks; and as it consists of different charges, has the appearance of so many distinct speeches. Wherever therefore you begin or end, you may consider what follows, either as connected with what
went

went before, or making of itself a new subject ; so that you may look upon it as very long upon the whole, and yet as extremely short with respect to its particular parts. Farewell.

Epist. V. PLINY to TIRO.

YOU deserve the highest applauses for the mildness with which, as I am informed, (and I make very strict inquiry), you administer justice in your province ; one principal branch of which is to distinguish merit in every degree, and so to gain the love of the lower rank, as to preserve at the same time the affection of their superiors. But it is an error many have fallen into, that while they endeavour to avoid the appearance of favouring the great, they run into the contrary extreme, and gain the character of acting with ill manners, or ill nature. A mistake this, which you are far from committing, I well know : however, I cannot forbear throwing in a caution with my applause, and recommending it to you, to conduct yourself in such a manner as to keep up the distinction of rank and dignity. For to level and confound the different orders of mankind, is far from producing an equality among them ; it is, in truth, the most unequal thing imaginable. Farewell.

Epist. VI. PLINY to CALVISIUS.

I Have spent these several days past in my study with the most pleasing tranquillity imaginable. You will ask how that can possibly be in the midst of Rome ? It was the time of celebrating the * Circensian games ; an entertainment

* These games were originally of Græcian extraction, but first introduced among the Romans by Romulus,

ment for which I have not the least taste. They have no novelty, no variety to recommend them, nothing, in short, one would wish to see twice. It is the more surprising therefore, that so many thousand people should be possessed with the childish passion of desiring often to see a parcel of horses gallop, and men standing upright in their chariots. If indeed it were the swiftness of the horses, or the skill of the men that attracted them, there might be some little pretence of reason on their side. But it is the dress they * favour; it is the dress that captivates them. And if in the midst of the course the different parties were to change habits, their different favourers would change sides, and instantly desert the very same men and horses, whom they just before were eagerly following with their eyes, as far as they could see, and hallooing out their names with all the warmth of exclamation. Such mighty charms, such wondrous power is there in a vile tunic! and this in the sentiments, not only of the vulgar (more contemptible than the habit they espouse), but even in the opinion of some grave personages. When I observe such men thus insatiably fond of so silly, so low, so uninteresting, so common an entertainment, I congratu-

lus, in order to favour his design of carrying off the Sabin virgins: they consisted of horse and chariot races, &c.

* The performers at these games were divided into companies, distinguished by the particular colour of their habits; the principal of which were the white, the red, the blue, and the green. Accordingly the spectators favoured one or the other colour, as humour and caprice inclined them. In the reign of Justinian, a tumult arose in Constantinople, occasioned merely by a contention among the partisans of these several colours, wherein no less than 30,000 men lost their lives.

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tulate myself that I am insensible to these pleasures ; and am glad to employ the leisure of this season upon my books, which others throw away upon the most idle employment. Farewell.

Epist. VII. PLINY to ROMANUS.

YOU write me, that you are engaged in building, and I am glad to find you are ; for I may now defend my own conduct by your example. I am myself employed in the same sort of work : and since I have you, who shall deny I have reason on my side ? We are pretty much agreed likewise, I find, in our situations : and as your buildings are carried on upon the sea-coast, mine are rising upon the side of the Larian lake. I have several villas upon the borders of this lake, but there are two particularly, in which as I take most delight, so they give me most employment. They are both situated in the manner of those at * Baiaæ ; one of them stands upon a rock, and has a prospect of the lake ; the other actually touches it. The first, supported as it were by the lofty † buskin, I call my tragic ; the other, as
resting

* It was the place the Romans chose for their winter-retreat, and which they frequented upon account of its warm baths. Some few ruins of the beautiful villas that once covered this delightful coast, still remain ; and nothing can give one a higher idea of the prodigious expense and magnificence of the Romans in their private buildings, than the manner in which some of these were situated. It appears from this letter, as well as from several other passages in the classic writers, that they actually projected into the sea, being erected upon vast piles sunk for that purpose.

† The buskin was a kind of high shoe worn upon the stage by the actors of tragedy, in order to give them

resting upon the humble sock, my comic villa. They have both their particular beauties, which recommend themselves to me so much the more, as they are of different kinds. The former commands a wider prospect of the lake; the latter enjoys a nearer view of it. This by an easy bend embraces a little bay; the promontory upon which the other stands, forms two. Here you have a straight walk extending itself along the banks of the lake; there a spacious terrace that falls by a gentle descent towards it. The former does not perceive the force of the waves; the latter breaks them: from that you see the fishing-vessels below; from this you may fish yourself, and throw your line out of your chamber, and even as you lie in bed, as out of a boat. It is the beauties therefore these agreeable villas possess, that tempt me to add to them those which are wanting. — But I need not assign a reason to you; who, undoubtedly, will think it a sufficient one that I follow your example. Farewell.

Epist. VIII. PLINY TO AUGURINUS.

AS I have been praised by you, should I begin to praise you in my turn, I am afraid it should seem I did so, not so much to shew my judgment, as my gratitude. Nevertheless I will not scruple to say, that I think all your productions are beautiful; especially, no doubt, those of which I am the subject. And the same reason will account both for their deserving that character, and for my thinking so: for as, on the one hand, you ever succeed best when friendship in-

them a more heroical elevation of stature; as the sock was something between a shoe and stocking, and appropriated to the comic players.

spires

spires you ; so, on the other, I always admire most what flatters my self-love. Farewell.

Epist. IX. PLINY to COLO.

I Greatly approve the generous grief you shew for the death of Pompeius Quinctianus, as it is a proof that your affection for your departed friend, does not terminate with his life. Far different from those who love, or rather, I should more properly say, who counterfeit love to none but the living ; nor indeed even that any longer than they are the favourites of fortune ; for the unhappy are no more the object of their thoughts, than the dead. But your friendship is raised upon a more lasting foundation, and the constancy of your affection can only end with your life. Quinctianus, most certainly, well deserved to meet with that generous warmth from his friends, of which he was himself so bright an example. He loved them in prosperity ; he protected them in adversity ; he lamented them in death. How open was his countenance ! how modest his conversation ! how equally did he temper gravity with gaiety ! how fond was he of learning ! how judicious his sentiments ! how dutiful to a father of a very different character ! and how did he reconcile his obedience to his virtue ; and continue a good son, without forfeiting the title of a good man ! — But I must not sharpen your affliction by reminding you of his merit — yet I know your affection for the memory of this excellent youth is such, that you had rather endure the pain of hearing him mentioned, than suffer his virtues to be passed over in silence ; especially by me, whose applause, you imagine, will adorn his actions, extend his fame, and restore him, as it were, to that life from which he is unhappily snatched. Farewell.

Epist.

*Epist. X. PLINY to TACITUS *.*

I Should with great pleasure obey your advice ; but there is such a scarcity of boars, that it is impossible to reconcile Minerva with Diana, who, you think, ought to be worshipped together. I must content myself then with paying my single homage to the former ; and even that with some restriction, as considering the heats of the season, and the privileged indolence of retirement. I composed, indeed, a few trifles in my journey hither, which are only fit to be destroyed, as they are written with the same negligence and inattention that one usually chats upon the road. Since I came to my villa, I have made some few additions to them, not finding myself in a humour to turn my thoughts to things of more consequence. Thus my poetry, which you imagine is carried on with so much advantage amidst the silence and solemnity of woods and groves, is, in truth, at a stand. I have also revised an oration

* The learned Cataneus, with some other commentators, imagines this letter does not belong to Pliny, but is the answer of Tacitus to the 6th epistle of the first book. He supports this conjecture, indeed, by no authority : only thinks it falls in exactly with the letter, to which he supposes it an answer, and fancies he discovers something in the style different from our author's manner. But, upon a comparison of the two letters, there seems little reason to believe one is an answer to the other. And as to any difference of style (if there really be any), it is much too precarious an argument to have any weight in the case. The supposition of Casaubon seems more probable, who thinks this epistle might be occasioned by one from Tacitus, wherein he reminded Pliny of his own advice to him, in that letter to which Cataneus imagines this an answer.

or two; though that kind of work is disagreeable and unentertaining enough, and has a much nearer affinity with rustic labours, than with rural pleasures. Farewell.

Epist. XI. PLINY to GEMINUS.

I Received your letter, which was particularly agreeable to me, as it mentioned your desire that I would send you something of mine to insert in your works. I shall find an occasion of complying with your request more proper than that which you propose, the subject you point out to me being attended with some objections; and when you consider it again, you will think so.—As I did not imagine there were any book-sellers at Lugdunum, I am so much the more pleased to learn that my works are sold there. I rejoice to find they maintain the character abroad, which they raised at home; and I begin to flatter myself they have some merit, since persons of such distant countries are agreed in their sentiments concerning them. Farewell.

Epist. XII. PLINY to JUNIOR.

A Certain person lately corrected his son with great severity before me, for being somewhat too profuse in the article of dogs and horses. “And pray,” said I to him, when the youth was withdrawn, “did you never commit a fault yourself which deserved your father’s correction? Nay, are you not sometimes even now guilty of errors, which your son, were he in your place, might with equal gravity reprove? Are not all mankind subject to follies? And have we not each of us our particular foibles in which we fondly indulge ourselves?”

The great affection I have for you, induced
me

me to set this instance of unreasonable severity before you, as a caution not to treat your son with too much rigour and austerity. Consider he is but a boy, and that there was a time when you were so too. In exerting, therefore, the authority of a father, remember always that you are a man, and the parent of a man. Farewell.

Epist. XIII. PLINY TO QUADRATUS.

THE eagerness and attention with which you read the vindication which I published of Helvidius*, has extremely raised your curiosity, it seems, to be informed of every circumstance, either mentioned or not mentioned in that defence; and, in short, the whole proceedings in that affair, as you were too young to be present yourself at that transaction. When Domitian was killed, a glorious opportunity, I thought, offered itself to me of pursuing the guilty, vindicating the injured, and advancing my own reputation. But, amidst an infinite variety of the blackest crimes, none appeared to me more atrocious, than that a senator, of prætorian dignity, and invested with the sacred character of a judge, should, even in the very senate itself, lay violent hands upon a member † of that august assembly; upon one, who formerly had the honour of being consul, and who then stood arraigned before him. Besides this general consideration, I had likewise a particular intimacy with Helvidius; as far as it was possible to have with one, who, fearing the tyranny of the times, endeavoured to veil the

* He was accused of treason, under pretence that in a dramatic piece which he composed, he had, in the characters of Paris and Oenone, reflected upon Domitian for divorcing his wife Domitia. Suet. in vit. Domit. c. 10.

† Helvidius.

glory of his fame, and the lustre of his virtues, in obscurity and retirement. Arria likewise, and her daughter Fannia who was mother-in-law to Helvidius, were in the number of my friends. But it was not so much private attachments, as the honour of the public, a just indignation at the action, and the danger of the example if it should pass unpunished, that animated me upon this occasion. At the first restoration of * liberty, every man singled out his particular enemy, (though it must be confessed, those only of a lower rank), and in the midst of much clamour and confusion, no sooner brought the charge than procured the condemnation. But for myself, I thought it would have more the appearance of moderation as well as resolution, not to take advantage of the general resentment of the public, but to crush this criminal with the single weight of his own enormous guilt. When, therefore, the first heat of public indignation began to cool, and declining passion gave way to justice, though I was at that time under great affliction for the loss of † my wife, I sent to Anteia, the widow of Helvidius, and desired her to come to me, as my late misfortune obliged me to keep at home. When she arrived, I acquainted her with my resolution not to suffer the injuries her husband had received, to pass unrevenge; and desired her to consult with Arria and Fannia (who were just returned from exile), whether she and they would join with me in the prosecution. Not that I wanted, I said, an associate, but that I was not so jealous of my own glory, as to refuse to share it with them in this af-

* Upon the accession of Nerva to the empire, after the death of Domitian.

† Our author's first wife; of whom we have no particular account. After her death, he married his favourite Calphurnia.

fair.

fair. She accordingly carried this message; and they all agreed to the proposal without the least hesitation. It happened very opportunely, that the senate was to meet within three days. It was a general rule with me to consult, in all my affairs, with Corellius, a person of the greatest prudence and wisdom this age has produced. However, in the present case, I relied entirely upon my own discretion, being apprehensive he would not approve of my design, as he was of a very slow and cautious temper. But though I did not previously deliberate with him, (experience having taught me, never to advise with a person upon an affair we are determined to pursue, where he has a right to expect that one shall be decided by his judgment), yet I could not forbear acquainting him with my resolution at the time I intended to carry it into execution. The senate being assembled, I came into the house, and begged I might have leave to make a motion; which I did in few words, and with general assent. When I began to touch upon the charge, and point out the person I intended to accuse, (though as yet without mentioning him by name), I was attacked on all side. "Let us know," says one, "who is the subject of this extraordinary motion? Who is it" (asked another) "that is thus accused, without acquainting the house with the name of the person, and the particular crime with which he is charged?" "Surely" (added a third) "we who have outlived the informations of former times, may expect now, at least, to remain in security." I heard all this with great calmness, and without being the least terrified. Such is the effect of being conscious of the integrity of one's designs; and so much difference is there with respect to inspiring confidence or fear in the breast of him who is engaged in any public action, whether

the world had only rather he should not do it, or absolutely condemns it. It would be too tedious to relate all that was thrown out by different sides upon this occasion. At length the consul acquainted me, that I should be at liberty to propose what I thought proper, when my turn came to give my opinion upon the * business of the day. I thanked him for allowing me a liberty, which he never yet (I said) refused to any; and so sat down: when immediately the house went upon other affairs. In the mean while, one of my consular friends took me aside, and with great earnestness telling me he thought I had carried on this affair with more boldness than prudence, used every method of reproof and persuasion, to prevail with me to desist; adding at the same time, that I should certainly, if I persevered, render myself odious to some future prince. "And so I would wish to be," (I returned), "should he prove a wicked one." He had scarce left me, when a second came up: "For God's sake," said he, "what are you attempting? Why will you ruin yourself? Do you consider to what hazards you are exposed? Why will you presume too much on the present situation of public affairs, when it is so uncertain what turn they may hereafter take? You are attacking a man who is actually at the head of the treasury, and will shortly be consul. Besides, do you consider what credit he has, and with what powerful friendships he is supported?" Upon which he named a certain person, who (not without several strong and suspicious rumours)

* It is very remarkable, that when any senator was asked his opinion in the house, he had the privilege of speaking as long as he pleased upon any other affair, before he came to the point in question. *Aul. Gell. lib. 4. c. 10.*

was then at the head of a powerful army in the east. I replied,

*All I've foreseen, and oft in thought revolv'd ** ;

“and am willing, if fate shall so decree, to suffer in an honest cause, provided I can draw vengeance down upon an infamous one.”

The time for the members to give their opinion was now arrived. Domitius Apollinaris, the consul elect, spoke first; after him Fabricius Vejentō, then Fabius Posthumius, Vectius Proculus next, (who married my wife's mother, and who was colleague of Publicius Certus, the person on whom the debate turned), and last of all Ammius Flaccus. They all defended Certus, as if I had named him, (though I had not yet so much as once mentioned him), and entered upon the particular justification of a crime, which I had only touched upon in general terms. It is not necessary to repeat, in this place, what they said, as I have related it in their own words in the speech above mentioned. Avidius Quinctus, and Cornutus Tertullus answered them. The former observed, “that it was extremely unjust not to hear the complaints of those who thought themselves injured, and therefore that Arria and Fannia ought not to be denied the privilege of laying their grievances before the house; and that the point for the consideration of the senate was not the rank of the person, but the merit of the cause.” Then Cornutus rose up and told the house, “that as he was appointed guardian to the daughter of Helvidius by the consuls, upon the petition of her mother and her father-in-law, he thought himself obliged to fulfil the duty of his trust. In the execution of which, however, he would endeavour to set some bounds to his indigna-

* *Æneid. lib. 6. ver. 105.*

tion,

"tion, by following that great example of mode-
 "ration which those excellent women * had set,
 "who contented themselves with barely inform-
 "ing the senate of the cruelties which Certus
 "committed in order to carry on his infamous
 "adulation. And therefore," he said, "he would
 "only move, that if a punishment due to a crime
 "so notoriously known, should be remitted, that
 "at least Certus might be branded with some
 "mark of the displeasure of that august assem-
 "bly." Satrius Rufus spoke next, and endea-
 "vouring to steer a kind of middle course, expres-
 "sed himself with much ambiguity. "I am of
 "opinion," said he, "great injustice will be
 "done to Certus, if he is not acquitted, (for I do
 "not scruple to mention his name, since the
 "friends of Arria and Fannia, as well as his
 "own, have done so too), nor indeed have we
 "any occasion to be solicitous upon his account.
 "We who think well of the man, shall judge
 "him with the same impartiality as the rest:
 "but if he is innocent, as I hope he is, and shall
 "be glad to find, I think this house may very
 "justly deny the present motion, till something
 "shall be proved against him." Thus, accord-
 "ing to the respective order in which they were cal-
 "led † upon, they delivered their several opinions.
 When it came to my turn, I rose up, and using
 the same introduction to my speech as I have pu-
 blished in the defence, I replied to them severally.

* Arria and Fannia.

† In the early times of the republic they began by
 asking the opinion of the prince of the senate, and the
 rest went on each according to his age. Under the
 emperors, their will served as a rule: for as the
 prince presided in the senate, he demanded the opi-
 nion of him first, whom he thought fit to do that
 honour: however, he more usually began with the
 consuls.

It

It is surprising with what an universal assent I was heard, even by those who just before were loudest against me: such a wonderful change was wrought either by the importance of the affair, the eloquence of the speech, or the resolution of the advocate. After I had finished, Veiento attempted to reply; but the general clamour raised against him, not permitting him to go on, "I hope, my Lords," said he, "you will not oblige me to implore the assistance of the tribunes." Immediately the tribune Murena cried out, "You have my leave, most illustrious Veiento, to proceed." But still the clamour was renewed. In the interval, the consul ordered the house to divide, and having counted the voices, dismissed the senate, leaving Veiento in the midst, still attempting to speak. He made great complaints of this affront (as he called it), applying the following lines of Homer to himself:

** Great perils, father, wait th' unequal fight;
Those younger champions will oppress thy might.*

There was scarce a man in the senate that did not embrace and kiss me, and all strove who should applaud me most, for having, with the utmost hazard to myself, revived a custom so long disused, of freely consulting the senate upon affairs that concern the honour of the public; in a word, for having wiped off that odium which was thrown upon it by other orders in the state, "that the senators mutually favoured the members of their own body, while they were extremely severe in animadverting upon the rest of their fellow-citizens." All this was trans-

* Diomedes's speech to Nestor, advising him to retire from the field of battle. Iliad. iii. 102. Pope.

acted

acted in the absence of Certus; who kept out of the way, either because he suspected something of this nature was intended to be moved, or (as was said in his excuse) that he was really indisposed. Cæsar, however, did not refer the examination of this matter to the senate. But I obtained nevertheless, what I aimed at, another person being appointed to succeed Certus in the consulship, while the election of his colleague to that office was confirmed. And thus the wish with which I concluded my speech, was actually accomplished: "May he be obliged," said I, "to renounce under a * virtuous prince, that reward he received from an infamous one †." Some time after I recollected as well as I could, the speech I had made upon this occasion; to which I threw in some additions. It happened (though indeed it had the appearance of being something more than casual), that a few days after I had published this piece, Certus was taken ill and died. It was reported, that his imagination was continually haunted with this affair, and represented me always before his eyes, like a man that was pursuing him with a dagger. Whether there was any truth in this rumour, I will not venture to affirm; but for the sake of example, however, I could wish it might gain credit. And now I have sent you a letter, which (considering it is a letter) is as long as the defence you say you have read; but you must thank yourself, for not being contented with the information that piece could afford you. Farewell.

* Nerva

† Domitian; by whom he had been appointed consul elect, though he had not yet entered upon that office.

Epist.

Epist. XIV. PLINY to TACITUS.

THough you do not care to hear your own praises, yet, be assured, none of my writings are more sincerely the undissembled dictates of my real thoughts, than those of which you are the subject. Whether, indeed, posterity will concern herself with either of us, I know not; but surely we deserve some small regard at least, I will not say upon account of our geniuses, (that would be too vain a pretension), but from our application, our labours, and that high reverence we pay to her. Proceed we then, my friend, in the course we have begun, which as it has conducted some few to the fairest point of lustre and reputation, so it has led out numbers from silence and obscurity. Farewell.

Epist. XV. PLINY to FALCO.

I Retired to my villa at Tuscum, with the hopes of passing my time here, at least, in my own way: but that is a privilege, I find, I am not to enjoy even here; so greatly am I interrupted with the troublesome complaints and petitions of my tenants. I look over their papers with more reluctance than my own; for, to confess the truth, it is with great unwillingness I review even them. I am revising, however, some little orations; an employment which, after a length of time has intervened, is but of a very cold and unenterprising kind. In the mean while, my private affairs are neglected as much as if I were absent. Yet I sometimes so far act the part of a careful master of a family, as to mount my horse and ride about my farms, instead of taking my exercise in the gestatio. As for you, I hope you will keep up your old custom, and, in return for
this

this account of my rural affairs, let me know what is going forward in town. Farewell.

Epist. XVI. PLINY to MAMILIANUS.

I AM not surpris'd that the chace you mention afforded you infinite pleasure, since "the number of the slain" (to use your own historical * expression) "was not to be counted." As for myself, I have neither leisure nor inclination for sports of that kind: not leisure, because I am in the midst of my vintage; not inclination, because it has proved an extreme bad one this season. However, I shall be able, I hope, to draw off some new verses, at least, if not new wine, for your entertainment, which (since you request them in so agreeable a manner) I will not fail to send you, as soon as they shall be thoroughly settled. Farewell.

Epist. XVII. PLINY to GENITOR.

I HAVE received your letter, in which you complain of being highly disgusted lately at an entertainment, though exceeding splendid, by a set of buffoons, fools, and wanton prostitutes, who were playing their antic tricks † round the tables.

* An expression frequent among the historians in their descriptions of battles.

† These persons were introduced at most of the tables of the great, for the purposes of mirth and gaiety, and constituted an essential part in all polite entertainments among the Romans. It is surprising how soon this great people fell off from their original severity of manners, and were tainted with the false refinements of foreign luxury. Livy dates the rise of this, and other unmanly delicacies, from the conquest

tables. But let me advise you to smoothe your brow a little. I confess, indeed, I admit nothing of this kind at my own house; however, I bear with it in others. "And why then" (you will be ready to ask) "should you not have them yourself?" The truth is, because the soft gestures of the wanton, the pleasantries of the buffoon, or the extravagancies of the fool, give me no entertainment, as they give me no surprise. It is my particular taste, you see, not my judgment, that I plead against them. And, indeed, what numbers are there who think the entertainments which you and I are most delighted with, to be no better than impertinent follies! How many are there, who as soon as a reader, a musician, or a comedian is introduced, either take their leave of the company, or if they continue at the table, shew as much dislike to this kind of diversions, as you did at those monsters, as you call them! Let us bear therefore, my friend, with others in their amusements, that they, in return, may shew indulgence to ours. Farewell.

Epist. XVIII. PLINY TO SABINUS.

WITH what a degree of application and study you have read my works, and how perfectly you will treasure them in your memory, your letter is a sufficient testimony. Do you consider, then, what a troublesome affair you are bringing upon your hands, when you kindly en-

conquest of Scipio Asiaticus over Antiochus. This triumphant army caught, it seems, the contagious softness of the people it subdued; and, at its return to Rome, spread an infection among their countrymen, which worked by slow degrees till it affected their total destruction. Thus did eastern luxury revenge itself on Roman arms!

tice me, by every friendly art to communicate to you as many of them as possible? I cannot, certainly, refuse your request; but shall comply with it, however, at different intervals, and observe some kind of succession. For I would not, by too copious and too frequent a supply, overburthen and confound a memory, to which I already owe so many acknowledgments; nor, in short, pour in such an unreasonable quantity, as to oblige it to discharge what it had before received, in order to retain what follows. Farewell.

Epist. XIX. PLINY to RUFFO.

YOU inform me, that you have read, in a letter * of mine, that Verginius Rufus directed the following lines to be inscribed upon his tomb:

*Here Rufus lies, who Vindex' arms withstood,
Not for himself, but for his country's good.*

You censure him for this; and add, that Frontinus acted much more reasonably, and discreetly, in forbidding any monument whatsoever to be erected to his memory. And in the conclusion of your letter you desire my sentiments upon each. I loved them both; but I confess I admired him most whom you condemn; and to such a degree, that so far from imagining I ever should have occasion to rise up in his defence, I thought he could never be sufficiently applauded. In my opinion, every man who has acted a great and memorable part, deserves not only to be excused, but approved, if he pursues that glorious immortality of fame he has merited, and endeavours to perpetuate an everlasting remembrance of himself, e-

* To Albinus. See book 6. let. 10.

ven by monument alinscriptions. Yet hardly shall you find a man, who had performed such great achievements, so modestly reserved upon the subject of his own actions, as Verginius was. I can bear him witness, (and I had the happiness to enjoy his intimacy and affection), that I never but once heard him mention his own conduct; and that was, in giving an account of a conversation which passed between him and Cluvius: "You well know" (said Cluvius to him) "the delicety required in an historian; you will pardon me therefore, I hope, if you should meet with any thing in my works, that is not agreeable to you." "O Cluvius," he replied, "can you be ignorant that what I did, was in order that every man might enjoy the liberty of writing what he pleased?" But let us compare Frontinus with him in that very instance, wherein you think the former is more modest and reserved. He forbid a monument to be erected to him, it is true; but in what words? "The expense of a monument," says he, "is superfluous; my memory will remain, if my actions deserve it." Is there less vanity, do you think, thus to proclaim to all the * world that his memory would remain, than to mark upon a single tombstone, in two lines, the actions one has performed? It is not, however, my design to condemn your favourite; I only mean to defend Verginius: and what argument can be more prevailing with you, than one drawn from a comparison between him and the person you prefer? In my own opinion, indeed, neither of them deserve to be condemned, since they both pursued glory with the same passion, but by different roads;

* It appears from hence, that this was not a testamentary direction, but a declaration in some work which Frontinus had published.

the former, in desiring those monumental honours he had merited; the latter, in rather chusing the appearance of despising them. Farewell.

Epist. XX. PLINY TO VENATOR.

YOUR letter was so much the more agreeable to me, the longer it was; especially as it turned entirely upon my works. I am not at all surpris'd you should find a pleasure in them, since I know you have the same affection for every thing that belongs to me, as you have for myself.—

The getting in of my vintage (which though it has proved but a slender one this season, is, however, more plentiful than I expected) particularly employs me at present. It indeed I can with any propriety say so, who only gather a grape now and then, visit the vine-press, taste the must in the vat, and saunter to my domestics; who being all engaged without doors, have wholly abandoned me to my readers and my secretaries. Farewell.

Epist. XXI. PLINY TO SABINIANUS.

YOUR freedman, against whom you expressed so much anger, came to me, and threw himself at my feet with as much submission as he could have done at yours. He earnestly requested me with many tears, and even with all the eloquence of silent sorrow, to intercede for him; in short, he convinced me by his whole behaviour, that he sincerely repents of his fault. And I am persuaded he is thoroughly reformed, because he seems entirely sensible of his guilt. I know you are angry with him, and I know too, it is not without reason; but clemency can never exert itself with more applause, than when there

is

is the justest cause for resentment. You once had an affection for this man, and, I hope, will have again : in the mean while, let me only prevail with you to pardon him. If he should incur your displeasure hereafter, you will have so much the stronger plea in excuse for your anger, as you shew yourself more exorable to him now. Allow something to his youth, to his tears, and to your own natural mildness of temper : do not make him uneasy any longer ; and I will add too, do not make yourself so ; for a man of your benevolence of heart cannot be angry without feeling great regret. I am afraid, were I to join my entreaties with his, I should seem rather to compel, than request you to forgive him. Yet I will not scruple to do it ; and in so much the stronger terms, as I have very sharply and severely reprov'd him, positively threatening never to interpose again in his behalf. But though it was proper to say this to him, in order to make him more fearful of offending ; I do not say so to you. I may, perhaps, again have occasion to entreat you upon his account, and again obtain your forgiveness ; supposing, I mean, his error should be such as may become me to intercede for, and you to pardon. Farewell.

Epist. XXII. PLINY to SEVERUS.

THE illness of Passienus Paulus has occasioned to me not a little uneasiness ; and indeed I have many and just reasons. He has a most excellent and generous heart, of which I have the happiness to share the warmest friendship. In his writings he very successfully emulates the ancients, whose spirit and manner he has closely imitated and happily restored ; especially that of Propertius, to whom he is no less related by genius, than by blood, as he particularly re-

seemles that poet in his chief excellency. When you read his elegies, whatever is elegant, tender, and agreeable, will conspire to charm you; as you will clearly discover they derive their lineage from Propertius. He has lately made some attempts in the lyric kind, in which he as successfully copies the manner of Horace, as he has that of the other poet just mentioned: You would imagine, were there such a thing as a kindred in genius, that the blood of Horace likewise flowed in his veins. He displays a most wonderful compass and pregnancy of imagination: when he describes the passion of love, you perceive his heart is entirely possessed by the most tender sentiments; when he paints the emotions of grief, you see his breast is penetrated with the deepest sorrow; when he enters upon topics of panegyric, it is with all the ardour of the warmest benevolence; when he diverts himself with subjects of pleasantry, it is in the spirit of the most agreeable gaiety; in short, whatever species of poetry he engages in, he executes it with such a masterly hand, that one would imagine it were the single branch to which he had applied himself. The dangerous indisposition of such a friend and such a genius, occasioned as much anxiety to me, as it did pain to him. But at length he is recovered, and my peace is restored: an event which deserves your congratulation, not only for my sake, but for the sake of learning itself, which ran as great a hazard by his danger, as it will receive glory by his recovery. Farewell.

Epist. XXIII. PLINY to MAXIMUS.

IT has frequently happened, as I have been pleading, that the centumviri, after having preserved as much as possible the gravity and solemnity

lemnity suitable to their character, have at length been forced, as it were, to break through all restraints, and have risen up, with one consent, in my applause. I have often likewise gained as much glory in the senate, as my utmost wishes could desire: but I never was touched with a more sensible pleasure than by an account which I lately received from Cornelius Tacitus. He informed me, that, at the last Circensian games, he sat next to a Roman knight, who, after much discourse had passed between them upon various points of learning, asked him if he was an Italian, or a provincial? Tacitus replied, "Your acquaintance with literature must have informed you who I am." "Ay!" said the knight, "Pray then is it Tacitus or Pliny I am talking with?" I cannot express how highly I am pleased to find, that our names are not so much the proper appellatives of men, as a kind of distinction for learning herself; and that eloquence renders us known to those who would be ignorant of us by any other means. An accident of the same nature happened to me a few days ago. Fabius Rufinus, a person of distinguished merit, was placed next to me at table; and below him a countryman of his, who was just then come to Rome for the first time. Rufinus desired his friend to take notice of me, and fell into a conversation upon the subject of my eloquence: to whom the other immediately replied, "That must undoubtedly be Pliny." To own the truth, I look upon these instances as a very considerable recompense of my labours. Had Demosthenes reason to be pleased with the old woman of Athens crying out, * "This is Demosthenes!"

* The story, as related by Tully, is thus: Demosthenes met an old woman carrying a pail of water, upon which she whispers to her companion, "This

"*sthenes!*" And may I not be allowed to congratulate myself upon the extensive reputation my name has acquired? Yes, my friend, I will rejoice in it, and without scruple own that I do. As I only mention the judgment of others concerning me, not the opinion I conceive of myself, I am not afraid of incurring the censure of vanity *; especially

"This is Demosthenes!" I must not however conceal from the reader, that Tully condemns the Grecian orator for being pleased upon this occasion, and accounts for it in the true spirit of genuine philosophy †, *apud alios loqui videlicet didicerat, non multum ipse secum*: he had learned the art of talking to others, but was unacquainted, it seems, with the most instructive of all arts, the art of *self-converse*: a little of this home-philosophy would have taught him, in the judgment of Tully, to rate vulgar admiration at a lower value.

* Those who have formed their notions of modesty according to the false refinements in manners, which latter times have introduced, will take offence, probably, at the advantageous terms in which Pliny here, and in some other passages of these letters, speaks of himself. But it will not be just to estimate our author's character, by maxims which have been received in the world long since he left it. It is most certain that modesty, according to the idea the ancients had of it, did not (neither in the truth of things does it) forbid a man to speak well of himself, where he has merit to support the character he claims. True modesty consisted only (as indeed it ought only to consist) in being ashamed to commit any thing base and unworthy; any thing unbecoming the dignity of human nature; any thing in defiance of that reverence we owe to ourselves, and to that rank we hold in the order of rational beings: she was, in short, the *custos virtutum omnium*, as Tully emphatical-

† Tusc. l. 5.

especially from you, who, as you envy no man's reputation, so you are particularly zealous for mine. Farewell.

ly calls her, the guardian and protectress of the whole train of human virtues. Pliny, who often recommends *modesty* as one of the most shining virtues in others, could never have spoken thus favourably of his own merit, if it had been contrary to the received notions of that most amiable quality. And that it was not, is extremely evident from the whole tenor of antiquity in the article of self-commendation. Homer's Ulysses (to borrow the observation of a very polite and judicious critic) "calls himself the *wise* of the Grecians, as his Achilles does not scruple "to represent himself the *best and most valiant* of "them; and that too in a council of all the princes: "Virgil has given us his approbation of both the "one and the other, in making *Æneas* talk frequently of his own piety and valour. Socrates, in Plato, "is always brought in to his advantage; he himself "quotes the oracle, which pronounced him to be the "wisest of men. Xenophon represents Cyrus upon his "deathbed, as taking notice of the *greatest beauty* "of his own character, his humanity; in a piece "which every one knows was designed for the character of a perfect prince. Cæsar and the great "Jewish writer of his own life frequently commend "themselves: the greatest critic, as well as the "greatest orator among the Romans, who so often "reckons modesty among the things which are most "necessary toward rendering a man great in his "profession; how open and frequent is he in "praising himself, and setting his own merit "in a true light? But what puts this beyond "dispute (and shews at the same time, that a just "commendation of one's self may be very consistent with the greatest modesty), is to be found in "the sacred writings, in which Moses says of himself, that he was the *meekest man upon earth*." Essay on Pope's Odyss. pt. 1. 52.

Epist.

Epist. XXIV. PLINY to SABINIANUS.

YOU have done well, upon the recommendation of my * letter, in receiving again into your family and favour, a freedman, whom you once admitted into a share of your affection. It will afford you, I doubt not, great satisfaction. It certainly, at least has me, both as it is a proof that you are capable of being governed in your passion, and as it is an instance of your paying so much regard to me, as either to yield to my authority, or to comply with my request. You will accept, therefore, at once, both of my applause and my thanks. At the same time I must advise you, to be disposed for the future to pardon the errors of your people, though there should be none to interpose in their behalf. Farewell.

Epist. XXV. PLINY to MAMILIANUS.

YOU make great complaints of the croud of military affairs which press upon you; and yet, as if you were enjoying the most uninterrupted leisure, you read and admire my poetical trifles, and not a little encourage me still to persevere in them. I begin, indeed, to pursue this kind of study, not only with a view to my amusement, but my glory, since they have approved themselves to the judgment of a man of your gravity, and learning, and what is more than all, of your veracity. At present I have some causes upon my hands, which (though not very deeply indeed, however) engage me; when I shall have dispatched these, I will again trust my muse in your candid bosom. You will suffer my little doves and sparrows to take wing among your

* See let. 21. of this book.

eagles *, if you should have the same good opinion of them as they have of themselves ; if not, you will kindly confine them to their cage and their nests. Farewell.

Epist. XXVI. PLINY TO LUPERCUS.

I Said once (and I think not improperly) of a certain orator of the present age, whose compositions are extremely regular and correct, but by no means sublime and ornamented, “ his only fault is, that he has none.” Whereas he who is possessed of the true spirit of oratory, should be bold and elevated, and sometimes even flame out and be hurried away with all the warmth and violence of passion ; in short, he should frequently soar to great, and even dangerous heights : for precipices are generally near whatever is towering and exalted. The plain, it is true, affords a safer, but for that reason a more humble and inglorious path : they that run, are more likely to stumble than they that creep ; but the latter gain no honour by not slipping, while the former even fall with glory. It is with eloquence as with some other arts ; she is never more pleasing than when she hazards most. Have you not observed what acclamations our ropedancers excite, at the instant of imminent danger ? Whatever is most unexpected and hazardous, or, as the Greeks strongly express it, whatever is most daring, has always the greatest share of our admiration. The pilot’s skill is by no means equally proved in a calm, as in a storm : in the former case he tamely enters the port, unnoticed and unapplauded ; but when the cordage cracks, the mast bends, and the rudder groans, then is it that he shines forth in full lustre, and is adored as little inferior to a sea-god. The reason of my making this obser-

* Alluding to the Roman standard, which was an eagle fixed upon the top of a spear.

vation

vation is, because, if I mistake not, you have marked some passages in my writings for being tumid, exorbitant, and over-wrought, which, in my estimation, are full, and bold, and sublime. But it is material to consider, whether your criticism turns upon such points as are real faults, or only striking and remarkable expressions. Whatever is elevated is sure to be observed; but it requires a very nice judgment to distinguish the bounds between true and false grandeur; between a just and enormous height. To give an instance out of Homer, both of the grand and elevated style, in the following lines; which can scarce, I imagine, have escaped any reader's observation!

*Heav'n in loud thunder bids the trumpet sound;
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground *;*

— Again,

Reclin'd on clouds his steed and armour lay †.

So in this whole passage:

‡ *As torrents roll, increas'd by numerous rills,
With rage impetuous down their echoing hills,
Rush to the vales, and pour'd along the plain,
Roar through a thousand channels to the main.*

It requires, I say, a very delicate hand to poise these metaphors, and determine whether they are
too

* Iliad. xxi. 387. Pope's trans.

† Iliad. v. 356. speaking of Mars.

‡ Iliad. 4. ver. 452. Pope's transl. It is with great judgment Pliny distinguishes between grandeur and elevation, which, though they are sometimes confounded, are most certainly distinct. Grandeur seems to consist entirely in the sentiment, and is the first

too figurative and lofty, or truly majestic or sublime. Not that I think any thing which I have wrote or can write, admits of comparison with these. I am not extravagant enough to say so: what I would be understood to contend for is, that we should throw up the reins to eloquence, nor restrain the daring flights of genius within too narrow a compass. But it will be said, perhaps, there is a wide difference between orators and poets; as if, in truth, Tully were not as bold in his figures as any of the poets. But not to mention particular instances from him, in a point where, I imagine, there can be no dispute; does * Demosthenes himself, that mo-

first of the five species of sublimity which Longinus has enumerated. The passage that admired critic quotes from the account which Moses gives of the creation, is of this kind: *God said, Let there be light, and there was light.* Here is nothing in the expression ornamented or elevated; the language is plain and simple, yet conveys to the mind the noblest idea of omnipotence that the utmost efforts of the strongest imagination can conceive. But when a sublime thought is clothed (if I may so say) in all the graceful propriety of just figure, it then becomes elevated. The illustrations which our author produces from Homer, are of this sort, where greatness of sentiment is heightened by beauty or imagery.

* The design of Pliny in this letter is, to justify the figurative expressions he had employed, probably in some oration, by instances of the same warmth of colouring from those great masters of eloquence, Demosthenes and his rival Æschines. But the force of the passages which he produces from these orators, must necessarily be greatly weakened to a mere modern reader, some of them being only hinted at, as generally well known; and the metaphors in several of the others, have either lost much of their original spirit and boldness, by being introduced and received into common language, or cannot, perhaps, be preserved in an English translation.

del and standard of true oratory, does Demosthenes check and repress the fire of his genius, in that well-known passage which begins thus, "Ye infamous flatterers, ye evil geni!" &c. — And again, "It is neither with stones nor bricks that I have fortified this city," &c. — And afterwards; "I have thrown up these outworks before Attica, and pointed out to you all the resources which human prudence can suggest," &c. — And in another place; "O my countrymen, I swear by the immortal gods, that he is intoxicated with the grandeur of his own actions," &c. — But what can be more daring and beautiful than that long digression, which begins in this manner: "A terrible disease, O my countrymen, has seized upon all Greece," &c. ? — The following passage likewise, though something shorter, is conceived in the same boldness of metaphor: — "Then it was I rose up in opposition to the daring Pytho, who poured forth a torrent of menaces against you," &c. — The subsequent stricture is of the same stamp: "When a man has strengthened himself, as Philip has, in avarice and wickedness, upon the first pretence that offers itself, at the first false step, be it ever so inconsiderable, he bristles up his mane and destroys all," &c. — So in the same style with the foregoing is this: — "*Railed off*, as it were, from the privileges of society, by the concurrent and just judgments of the three tribunals in the city." — And in the same place: "O Aristogiton! you have betrayed that mercy which used to be shewn to offences of this nature, or rather indeed, you have wholly exhausted it. In vain then would you fly for refuge to a port, which you have shut up, and choked with piles." — He had said before; "I am afraid, therefore, you should appear, in the judgment of some, to have

"sit

“set up a public office for bad education; for there
 “is a weakness in all wickedness, which renders
 “it unable to support itself!” — And a little low-
 “er; “I see none of these resources open to
 “him; but all is *precipice, gulf, and profound*
 “*abyss.*” — And again: “Nor do I imagine that
 “our ancestors erected those courts of judicature,
 “that men of his character should be *planted*
 “there; but, on the contrary, that none may
 “desire to imitate their evil actions.” — And af-
 “terwards: “If he is then the *artificer* of every
 “wickedness, if he openly makes it his *trade* and
 “*traffic,*” &c. — And a thousand other passa-
 ges which I might cite to the same purpose; not
 to mention those expressions which Æschines
 says, are not words, but *wonders.* — You will
 tell me, perhaps, I have unwarily mentioned
 Æschines, since Demosthenes is condemned even
 by him, for running into these figurative expres-
 sions. But observe, I entreat you, how far su-
 perior the former orator is to his citicizer, and su-
 perior too in the very passages to which he ob-
 jects: for in others, the strength of his genius
 discovers itself; in those above quoted, the subli-
 mity of it shines out. But does Æschines him-
 self avoid what he reproves in Demosthenes?
 “The orator,” says he, “Athenians, and the
 “law, ought to *speak* the same language; but
 “when the *voice* of the law declares one thing,
 “and that of the orator another, we should give
 “our vote to the justice of the law, not to the
 “impudence of the orator.” — And in another
 place: “He afterwards manifestly discovered the
 “design he had, of concealing his fraud under
 “cover of the decree, having expressly declared
 “therein, that the ambassadors sent to the Oretæ
 “gave the five talents, not to you, but to Cal-
 “lias. And that you may be convinced what I
 “say is the truth (after having *stripped* the decree

“ of its *galleys*, its pomp and ostentation) read the “ clause itself.” — And in another part : “ Suffer him not to *break over* and *wander* out of the “ limits of the question .” A metaphor he is so fond of, that he repeats it again : “ But remaining firm and confident in the assembly, *drive* “ him into the merits of the question, and observe “ well how he *doubles*.” — Is his style more reserved and simple, when he says, “ But you are for “ ever *wounding* our ears, and are more concerned in the success of your daily harangues, than “ for the salvation of the city ?” — What follows is conceived in a yet higher strain of figure : “ Will you not expel this man as the common “ calamity of Greece ! will you not seize and “ punish this *pirate* of the state, who *sails* about “ in quest of favourable conjunctures ?” &c. — with many other passages of the like nature. And now I expect you will make the same attacks upon certain expressions in this letter, as you did upon those I have been endeavouring to defend. The rudder that *greans*, and the pilot compared to a *sea-god*, will not, I imagine, escape your criticism : for I perceive while I am suing for indulgence to my former style, I have fallen into the same turn of figure that you condemn. But attack them if you please, provided you will immediately appoint a day when we may meet to discuss these matters in person : you will then, either teach me to be less daring, or I shall learn you to be more bold. Farewell.

Epist. XXVII. PLINY to LATERANUS.

I Have had many occasions to observe the power, the dignity, the majesty, and I will add too, even the divine efficacy there is in history, but I never met with so strong an instance of it as lately. An author had recited part of an
historical

historical performance, which he had drawn up with the utmost regard to truth, reserving the remainder for another day. When behold! the friends of a certain person came to him, and earnestly conjured him not to recite the rest: so much were they ashamed to hear those actions repeated, which yet they did not blush to commit: the historian complied (as he well might, without any breach of honour) with their request. But, however, both the history and the action still remain, and will ever remain and be read; and read too with so much the greater curiosity, as the publication of it is delayed: for nothing raises the inquisitive disposition of mankind so much, as to defer the gratification of it. Farewell.

Epist. XXVIII. PLINY to ROMANUS.

YOUR letters have at length reached me, and I received three at once; all written in the strongest spirit of eloquence and friendship, and such as I had reason to expect from you, especially after having wished for them so long. In one, you injoin me the very agreeable commission of forwarding your letter to that excellent lady, the virtuous * Plotina: I will take care to

* Plotina was consort to the emperor Trajan. Her virtues are celebrated by several historians, and our author draws a most amiable character of her in few words, in his noble panegyric upon that prince. He represents her (and he could not give a higher idea of her) as meriting the choice of that excellent emperor; of a sanctity of manners worthy of ancient Rome; plain in her habit, modest in her equipage, and polite in her address. She greatly contributed, it is said, to the wise choice which Trajan made of a successor; and Adrian, in gratitude for her good of-

to do so. At the same time you recommend to me Popilius Artemisius; and accordingly I have performed your request. You tell me also your vintage has proved extremely moderate. That complaint, notwithstanding we are separated by such distant countries, is common to us both. Your second letter informs me, that you are employed in dictating and writing upon a subject, wherein you have me strongly in view. I am much obliged to you; and should be more so, if you would give me the pleasure of reading your performance. It is but just indeed, that as I communicate to you all my compositions, you should suffer me to partake of yours, even though they should turn upon subjects which concern others. You promise me in the close of your letter, that as soon as you shall be informed with certainty, in what manner I intend to dispose of myself, you will make an elopement from your family, and immediately fly to me: I am already preparing certain chains for you, which, when I have you here, you will by no means be able to break through. I learn from your third, that my oration in behalf of Clarius has been delivered to you, which appears, it seems, more full than when you heard it pronounced. It is so, I confess; for I afterwards very considerably enlarged it. You mention having sent me another letter, which you say was written with peculiar elegance, and desire to know if I have received it: I have not, but impatiently wish for its arrival. To make me amends, write to me upon every the first opportunity, and pay me with full interest for this delay; which I shall compute, be assured, at the

sices to him in that election, dedicated a magnificent temple to her memory, at Nîmes in Languedoc; the remains of which are still to be seen.

highest

highest rate: for tell me, can I acquit you upon more reasonable terms? Farewell.

Epist. XXIX. PLINY to RUSTICUS.

AS it is far better to excel in any single art, than to arrive only at a mediocrity in several; so, on the other hand, a moderate skill in several is to be preferred, where one cannot attain to perfection in any. Upon this maxim it is, that I have attempted compositions of various sorts, as I could not expect to carry any particular one to its highest point of excellency. I hope, therefore, when you read any performance of mine, you will consider it with that indulgence which is due to an author, who has not confined himself to a single manner of writing, but has struck out into different kinds. In every other sort of workmanship, the number pleads some excuse for the deficiencies of the artist; and shall works of literature, the most difficult of all others, be tried by a severer law? But whilst I am bespeaking your candour, am I not bringing my gratitude in question? For, if you receive these last pieces with the same indulgence that you have all my former, I have more reason to hope for your applause, than to sue for your pardon. However, your pardon will be sufficient. Farewell.

Epist. XXX. PLINY to GEMINIUS.

YOU have frequently in conversation, and lately in a letter, commended your friend Nonius to me for his great liberality to some particular persons: I shall join with you in his applause, if his bounty is not confined to those only. I would have him who desires to shew himself influenced by a spirit of true generosity, be liberal

to his country, his kindred, his relations, and his friends; his friends, I mean, in distress: not like those who chiefly bestow their presents, where there is the greatest ability to make returns. I do not look upon such as parting with any thing of their own; on the contrary, I consider their bounties as only so many disguised baits, thrown out with a design of catching the property of others. Much of the same character are those who defraud one man in order to be generous to another, and pursue munificence through the paths of avarice. The first and fundamental principle of genuine liberality, is to be contented with one's own; and after that to cherish and embrace all the most indigent of every kind, in one comprehensive circle of benevolence. If your friend observes this rule in its full extent, he is entirely to be commended; if he only partially pursues it, still he deserves (in a less degree indeed, however, he deserves) applause: so uncommon is it to meet with an instance of generosity even of the most imperfect kind! The lust of avarice has so totally seized upon mankind, that their wealth seems rather to possess them, than they to possess their wealth. Farewell.

Epist. XXXI. PLINY to SARDUS.

I Still continued with you, notwithstanding we had parted: for I entertained myself with reading over your book. And I frequently repeated with particular fondness (I honestly own it) those passages of which I am the subject: a subject upon which, indeed, you have been extremely copious. With what a variety of expression, and in how many different lights have you placed the same sentiments concerning the same person? Will you suffer me to mingle my applauses.

applauses with my acknowledgments? I can do neither, sufficiently; and if I could, there would be something, I fear, of vanity, in making that the subject of my praise, which is, in truth, the object of my thanks. I will only add then, that I thought your compliments to me raised the merit of your performance; as the merit of your performance heightened the pleasure of your compliments. Farewell.

Epist. XXXII. PLINY to TITIANUS.

WHAT are you doing? and what do you propose to do? As for myself, I pass my life in the most agreeable, that is, in the most disengaged manner imaginable. I do not find myself, therefore, in the humour to write a long letter, though I am to read one. I am too much a man of pleasure for the former, and just idle enough for the latter: for none are more indolent, you know, than the voluptuous, or have more curiosity than those who have nothing to do. Farewell.

Epist. XXXIII. PLINY to CANINIUS.

I Have met with a story, which, though it is supported by undoubted credit, has all the air of fable, and would afford a very proper subject for the sublimity of your lively, and truly poetical genius. It was related to me the other day at table, where the conversation happened to turn upon various kinds of miraculous events. The person who gave the account, was a man of unsuspected veracity: — but what has a poet to do with truth? However, you might venture to rely upon his testimony, even though you had the character of a faithful historian to support. There is in Africa a town called Hippo, situated
not

not far from the sea-coast : it stands upon a navigable lake, from whence a current runs into the main ocean, which ebbs and flows with the sea. Persons of all ages divert themselves here with fishing, sailing, or swimming; especially boys, whom love of play and idleness bring hither. The contest among them is, who shall have the glory of swimming farthest; and he that leaves the shore and his companions at the greatest distance, gains the victory. It happened in one of these trials of skill, that a certain boy, more bold than the rest, launched out towards the opposite shore. He was met by a dolphin *, who sometimes swam before him, and sometimes behind him, then played round him, and at last took him upon his back, then let him down, and afterwards took him up again; and thus carried the poor frightened boy out into the deepest part; when immediately he turns back again to the shore, and lands him among his companions. The fame of this remarkable accident spread through the town, and crowds of people flocked round the boy (whom they viewed as a kind of prodigy) to ask him questions and hear him relate the story. The next day the shore was lined with multitudes of spectators, all attentively observing the ocean, and (what indeed is almost itself an ocean) the lake. In the mean while the boys swam as usual, and among the rest, the youth I am speaking of went into the lake, but with more caution than before. The dolphin appeared again, and came to the boy, who together with his companions swam away with the utmost preci-

* This animal is celebrated by several of the ancients for its philanthropy, and Pliny the elder, in particular, relates this very story, among other instances, in confirmation of that notion. See Plin. hist. nat. l. 9. c. 8.

pitiation. The dolphin, as it were, to invite and recall them, bounded and dived up and down, winding about in a thousand different circles. This he practised for several days together, till the people (accustomed from their infancy to the sea) began to be ashamed of their timidity. They ventured, therefore, to advance nearer, playing with him and calling him to them, while he, in return, suffered himself to be touched and stroked. Use rendered them more courageous: The boy, in particular, who first made the experiment, swam by the side of him, and leaping upon his back, was carried about in that manner: thus they began to be fond of and acquainted with each other. There seemed now, indeed, to be no fear on either side, the confidence of the one and tameness of the other mutually increasing; the rest of the boys in the mean while surrounding and encouraging their companion. It is very remarkable, that this dolphin was followed by a second, which seemed only as a spectator and attendant on the former; for he did not at all submit to the same familiarities as the first, but only conducted him backwards and forwards, as the boys did their comrade. But what is farther surprising, and no less true than that I have already related, is, this dolphin who thus played with the boys and carried them upon his back, would come upon the shore, dry himself in the sand, and as soon as he grew warm, roll back into the sea. Octavius Avitus, deputy-governor of the province, from an absurd piece of superstition, poured * some precious ointment over him

* It was a religious ceremony practised by the ancients, to pour precious ointments upon the statues of their gods: Avitus, it is probable, imagined this dolphin was some sea-divinity, and therefore expressed his veneration of him by the solemnity of a sacred unction.

as he lay on the shore: the novelty and smell of which made him retire into the ocean, and it was not till after several days that he was seen again, when he appeared dull and languid; however, he recovered his strength, and continued his usual wanton tricks. All the magistrates round the country flocked hither to view this sight, the entertainment of whom upon their arrival, and during their stay, was an additional expense, which the slender finances of this little community would ill afford; besides, the quiet and retirement of the place was utterly destroyed. It was thought proper therefore to remove the occasion of this concourse, by privately killing the poor dolphin. And now, with what a flow of tenderness will you describe this sad * catastrophe! and how will your genius adorn and heighten this moving story! I hough, indeed, it does not require any fictitious embellishments; it will be sufficient to place the real circumstances in their full light. Farewell.

* The overflowing humanity of Pliny's temper breaks out upon all occasions, but he discovers it in nothing more strongly than by the impression which this little story appears to have made upon him. True benevolence, indeed, extends itself through the whole compass of existence, and sympathizes with the distress of every creature capable of sensation. Little minds may be apt to consider a compassion of this inferior kind, as an instance of weakness; but it is undoubtedly the evidence of a noble nature. Homer thought it not unbecoming the character even of a hero, to melt into tears at a distress of this sort, and has given us a most amiable and affecting picture of Ulysses weeping over his faithful dog Argus, when he expires at his feet.

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Epist. XXXIV. PLINY to TRANQUILLUS.

I AM under a strange difficulty, which you must settle. I have not, I am told, a good manner of reading verses: my talent lying chiefly in reciting orations, I succeed so much the worse, it seems, in poetry. I design therefore, as I am to recite some poems to my particular friends, to make use of my freedman for that purpose. It is an instance, I own, of my treating them with little ceremony, that I employ a person who is not himself very expert in this way. However, he will perform, I know, better than I can, provided his fears do not disconcert him; for he is as unpractised a reader as I am a poet. Now the important question is, how I shall behave while he is reading; whether I shall sit in a fixed and indolent posture, or follow him as he pronounces, with my eyes, hands, and voice; a manner which some, you know, practise? But I am apprehensive I can beat time * no better than I can read. I repeat it again therefore, you must extricate me out of this wondrous difficulty, and write me word whether you think it more excusable to read ill, than to practise or omit any of the weighty circumstances above mentioned. Farewell.

Epist. XXXV. PLINY to APPIUS.

I Have received the book, which you sent me, and return you thanks for it: but am at pre-

* In the original it is called *saltatio*, which means a motion of the hands accommodated either to one's own or another's elocution. Our language does not supply a proper word for this gesture.

sent so much engaged, that I have not time to read it: which, however, I impatiently wish to do. I have that high reverence for learning in general, and for your compositions in particular, that I think it a sort of profanation to approach them but with a mind entirely disengaged. — I extremely approve of your care in revising your works; remember, however, this exactness has its limits: too much polishing rather weakens than strengthens a performance. Besides, this excessive delicacy, while it calls one off from other pursuits, not only prevents any new attempts, but does not even finish what it has begun. Farewell.

Epist. XXXVI. PLINY to FUSCUS.

YOU desire to know in what manner I dispose of my time, in summer, at my villa at Tusculum. I rise just when I find myself in the humour, though generally with the sun; sometimes indeed sooner, but seldom later. When I am up, I continue to keep the shutters of my chamber-windows closed, as darkness and silence wonderfully promote meditation. Thus free and abstracted from those outward objects which dissipate attention, I am left to my own thoughts; nor suffer my mind to wander with my eyes, but keep my eyes in subjection to my mind, which, when they are not distracted by a multiplicity of external objects, see nothing but what the imagination represents to them. If I have any composition upon my hands, this is the time I chuse to consider it, not only with respect to the general plan, but even the style and expression, which I settle and correct as if I were actually writing. In this manner I compose more or less as the subject is more or less difficult, and I find myself able to retain it. Then I call my secretary,
and,

and, opening the shutters, I dictate to him what I have composed, after which I dismiss him for a little while, and then call him in again. About ten or eleven of the clock, (for I do not observe one fixed hour), according as the weather proves, I either walk upon my terrace, or in the covered portico, and there I continue to meditate or dictate what remains upon the subject in which I am engaged. From thence I get into my chariot, where I employ myself as before, when I was walking or in my study; and find this changing of the scene preserves and enlivens my attention. At my return home, I repose myself; then I take a walk, and after that, repeat aloud some Greek or Latin oration, not so much for the sake of strengthening my elocution * as my digestion; though indeed the voice at the same time finds its account in this practice. Then I walk again, am anointed, take my exercises, and go into the bath. At supper, if I have only my wife, or a few friends with me, some author is read to us; and after supper we are entertained either with music, or an interlude. When that is finished, I take my walk with my family, in the number of which I am not without some persons of literature. Thus we pass our evenings in various conversation; and the day, even when it is at the longest, steals away imperceptibly. Upon some occasions, I change the order in certain of the articles above mentioned. For instance, if I

* By the regimen which Pliny here follows, one would imagine, if he had not told us who were his physicians, that the celebrated Celsus was in the number. That author expressly recommends reading aloud, and afterwards walking, as beneficial in disorders of the stomach: *Si quis stomacho laborat, legere clare debet: post lectionem, ambulare, &c.* Celsi medic. l. 1. c. 8.

have studied longer or walked more than usual, after my second sleep, and reading an oration or too aloud, instead of using my chariot I get on horseback; by which means I take as much exercise, and lose less time. The visits of my friends from the neighbouring villages claim some part of the day; and sometimes, by an agreeable interruption, they come in very seasonably to relieve me when I am fatigued. I now and then amuse myself with sporting, but always take my tablets into the fields, that though I should not meet with game, I may at least bring home something. Part of my time too (though not so much as they desire) is allotted to my tenants; and I find their rustic complaints give a zest to my studies and engagements of the politer kind. Farewell.

Epist. XXXVH. PLINY to PAULINUS.

AS you are not of a disposition to expect from your friends the common ceremonies of the world, when they cannot observe them without inconvenience to themselves; so I too warmly love you to be apprehensive you will take otherwise than I wish you should, my not waiting upon you on the first day of your entrance upon the consular office; especially as I am detained here by the necessity of letting my farms upon long leases. I am obliged to enter upon an entire new method with my tenants; for under the former leases, though I made them very considerable abatements, they have run greatly in arrear. For this reason several of them have, not only taken no sort of care to lessen a debt, which they found themselves incapable of wholly discharging; but even seized and consumed all the produce of the lands, in the belief that it would now be no advantage to themselves to spare

spare it. I must therefore obviate this increasing evil, and endeavour to find out some remedy against it. The only one I can think of is, not to reserve my rent in money, but in kind, and so place some of my servants to overlook the tillage, and guard the stock; as indeed there is no sort of revenue more agreeable to reason, than what arises from the bounty of the soil, the seasons and the climate. It is true, this method will require great integrity and diligent attendance in the person I appoint my bailiff, and put me to the expense of employing many hands. However, I must hazard the experiment; and, as in an inveterate distemper, try every change of remedy. You see, it is not any pleasurable indulgence, that prevents my attending you on the first day of your consulship. I shall celebrate it nevertheless, as much as if I were present, and pay my vows for you here, with all the warmest sentiments of joy and congratulation. Farewell.

Epist. XXXVIII. PLINY to SATURNINUS.

YES, I sincerely applaud your friend Rufus; not because you desire me, but because I think he highly merits approbation. I have read his very finished performance; to which, though my affection for the author added a considerable recommendation, yet it did not blind my judgment: for the malicious critic is not, I trust, the only judicious reader. Farewell.

Epist. XXXIX. PLINY to MUSTIUS.

IN compliance with the advice of the * aruspices, I intend to rebuild and enlarge the

* The business of the aruspices was, to examine the beasts which were offered in sacrifice, and from thence to foretell the success of any enterprise.

temple of Ceres, which stands upon my estate. It is indeed a very ancient fabric, and though extremely small, yet upon a certain stated anniversary is much frequented. On the 13th of September great numbers of people from all the country round assemble there, at which time many affairs are transacted, and many vows paid and offered; but there is no shelter for them against the inclemency of the weather. I imagine, then, I shall do at once an act of piety and munificence, if at the same time that I build a beautiful temple, I add to it a spacious portico; the first for the service of the goddess, the other for the use of the people. I beg therefore you would purchase for me four marble pillars, of whatever kind you shall think proper; as also a quantity of marble for laying the floor and incrusting the walls. You must likewise either buy a statue of the goddess, or procure one to be made; for age has maimed, in some parts, the ancient one of wood which stands there at present. With respect to the portico, I do not recollect there is any thing you can send me that will be serviceable; unless you will sketch me out a plan suitable to the situation of the place. It is not practicable to build it round the temple, because it is encompassed on one side by the river whose banks are exceedingly steep; and on the other, by the high road. Beyond this road lies a very large meadow, in which the portico may be conveniently enough placed, opposite to the temple; unless you, who know so well how to conquer the inconveniencies of nature, by art, can propose some better situation. Farewell.

Epist.

Epist. XL. PLINY to FUSCUS.

YOU are much pleased, I find, with the account I gave you in my former * letter, of the manner in which I spend the summer-season at Tusculum; and desire to know what alteration I make in my method, when I am at Laurentinum in the winter? None at all, except abridging myself of my sleep at noon, and employing part of the night in study; and if any cause requires my attendance at Rome, (which in winter very frequently happens), instead of having interludes or music after supper, I meditate upon what I have dictated, and, by often revising it in my own mind, fix it in my memory. Thus I have given you my scheme of life in summer and winter; to which you may add the intermediate seasons of spring and autumn. As at those times I lose nothing of the day, so I study but little in the night. Farewell.

B O O K X.

Containing PLINY's Epistles to TRAJAN, and those of TRAJAN to PLINY.

Epist. † I. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE dutiful affection you bore, most sacred Emperor, to your august father, made you

* See let. 36. of this book.

† The greater part of the following letters, were written by Pliny during his administration in the province of Bithynia. They are of a style and character extremely different from those in the preceding collection; whence some critics have injudiciously inferred,

you wish it might be late ere you succeeded him. But the immortal gods thought proper to hasten the advancement of those virtues to the helm of the commonwealth, which had already so successfully shared in the conduct of it *. May you then, and the world through your means, enjoy every prosperity worthy of your times; to which let me add my wishes, most excellent Emperor, upon a private as well as public account,

inferred, that they are the production of another hand; not considering, that the occasion necessarily required a different manner. In letters of business, as these chiefly are, turn and sentiment would be foreign and impertinent; politeness and elegance of expression being the essentials that constitute perfection in this kind: and in that view, though they may be less entertaining, they have not less merit than the former. But besides their particular excellence as letters, they have a farther recommendation as so many valuable pieces of history, by throwing a strong light upon the character of one of the most amiable and glorious princes in the Roman annals. Trajan appears throughout, in the most striking attitude that majesty can be placed; in the exertion of power to the godlike purposes of justice and benevolence: and what one of the ancient historians has said of him, is here clearly verified, that *he rather chose to be loved than flattered by his people*. To have been distinguished by the favour and friendship of a monarch of so exalted a character, is an honour that reflects the brightest lustre upon our author; as to have been served and celebrated by a courtier of Pliny's genius and virtues, is the noblest monument of glory that could have been raised to Trajan.

* Nerva, who succeeded Domitian, reigned but sixteen months and a few days. Before his death he not only adopted Trajan, and named him for his successor, but actually admitted him into a share of the government; giving him the titles of *Cæsar*, *Germanicus*, and *Imperator*. Vid. Plin. Paneg.

that

that your health and spirits may be preserved firm and unbroken.

Epist. II. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

YOU have occasioned me, Sir, an inexpressible pleasure, by thinking me worthy of enjoying the privilege which the laws confer on those who have three children. For though it was an indulgence to the request of your very affectionate and worthy friend Servilianus, that you granted this favour; yet I have the satisfaction to find by the words of your rescript, that you complied the more willingly, as his application was in my behalf. I cannot but look upon myself as in possession of my utmost wish, after having thus received, at the entrance of your auspicious government, so distinguishing a mark of your peculiar favour; at the same time that it considerably heightens my desire of leaving a family behind me. I was not without this inclination even in those most wretched times *; as my two marriages will easily incline you to believe. But the gods decreed it better, by reserving every valuable privilege to the bounty of your generous dispensations. And indeed the pleasure of being a father will be so much more acceptable to me now, that I can enjoy it in full freedom and security.

Epist. III. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE ample experience, Sir, I have had of your unbounded generosity to me, in my own person, encourages me to hope I may be yet farther obliged to it, in favour of my friends. Voconius Romanus (who lives and was bred up with me) claims the first rank in that number;

* Alluding to the execrable reign of Domitian.

in consequence of which I petitioned your sacred father to promote him to the dignity of the senatorial order. But the completion of my request is reserved to your goodness; for his mother had not then advanced, in the manner the law directs, the four hundred thousand sesterces which she engaged to give him, in her letter to the emperor your late father: This, however, by my advice she has since done, having conveyed to him a sufficient estate in land, with all the necessary formalities. The difficulties therefore being removed which deferred our wishes, it is with full confidence I venture to assure you of the merit of my friend Romanus, heightened and adorned as it is, not only by the liberal and polite arts, but by his extraordinary tenderness to his parents. It is to that virtue he owes the present liberality of his mother, as well as his immediate * succession to his late father's estate, and his having been adopted by his father-in-law. To these personal qualifications, the wealth and rank of his family give an increase of lustre; as I persuade myself it will be some additional recommendation to your favour, that I solicit in his behalf. Let me then entreat you, Sir, to put it in my power to congratulate Romanus, on an occasion so highly agreeable to me; and at the same time to gratify an eager, and I hope a laudable ambition of being able to boast, that your favourable regards are extended, not only to myself, but also to my friend.

* Meaning, perhaps, that though he was under age when his father died, yet he had so much confidence in the prudence of Romanus, that he did not appoint him, as usual, a guardian by his will; but left him to the immediate possession of his estate.

Epist.

Epist. IV. [xx.] * PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

WHen by your gracious indulgence, Sir,
I was promoted to the head of the
† treasury of Saturn, I immediately renounced
all

* N. B. The following letters, to the 30th, are not ranged in the same order as they are placed in any of the Latin editions; the editor having taken the liberty of changing their situation, for the sake of bringing some letters together which throw a light upon each other. The figures included between this mark [] refer to the order in which they commonly stand.

† The public treasure was kept in the temple of Saturn, where the spoils of the conquered nations were deposited. Julius Cæsar seized upon this temple in the time of the civil war; and what an immense wealth that threw into his hands, may be judged by the elegant description which Lucan gives of the riches it contained.

*At length the sacred storehouse open laid,
The boarded wealth of ages past display'd:
There might be seen the sums proud Carthage sent,
Her long impending ruin to prevent;
There heap'd the Macedonian treasures shone,
What great Flaminius and Æmilius won
From vanquish'd Philip, and his helpless son.
There lay what flying Pyrrhus lost, the gold
Scorn'd by the patriot's honesty of old;
Whate'er our parsimonious fires could save:
What tributary gifts rich Syria gave;
The hundred Cretan cities ample spoil;
What Cato gather'd from the Cyprian isle.
Riches of captive kings by Pompey born
In happier days his triumph to adorn,
From utmost India, and the rising morn;
Wealth infinite!*

Lucan. iii. 155.
Pliny

all engagements of the bar, (as indeed I never blended business of that kind with the functions of the state), that no avocations might call off my attention from the post to which I was appointed. For this reason when the people of Africa petitioned that I might undertake their cause against Marius Priscus, I excused myself from that office; and accordingly my excuse was admitted. But when afterwards the consul elect proposed, that the senate should apply to us again, and endeavour to prevail with us to yield to its inclinations, and suffer our names to be thrown into the * urn, I thought it most suitable to that tranquillity and good order which so happily distinguishes your times, not to oppose (especially in so reasonable an article) the will of that august assembly. And, as I am desirous that all my words and actions may be approved by your ex-

Pliny the elder has given a particular account of this treasure which Cæsar seized, both in gold and silver plate and in coin; the amount of which, according to Dr Arbuthnot's computation, is 1,093,979 l. 3 s. 4 d. But if there is no mistake in these sums, Cæsar did not take away by far so much as he brought in; for Plutarch relates, that he placed at one time in the treasury 65,000 talents; which, according to the same ingenious author's calculation, is equivalent to 12,593,750 pounds. Arb. Tab. 191.

* Other senators, as well as Pliny, had excused themselves, it seems, from undertaking the management of this cause: it was proposed therefore, that they should cast lots; which is the meaning of "suffering their names to be thrown into an urn;" being made use of in decisions of this kind. Accordingly the lot fell upon our author, and his great friend the famous Cornelius Tacitus. See b. 2. let. 11. where there is a full account of this trial.

emplary

emplary virtue, I hope you will think my compliance was proper.

Epist. V. [xxi.] The Emperor TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU acted as became a good citizen and a worthy senator, by paying obedience to the just injunctions of that august assembly: and I have full confidence you will faithfully discharge the part you have undertaken.

Epist. VI. [iv.] PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

HAVING been attacked last year by a severe and dangerous illness, I employed a * physician, whose care and diligence, Sir, I cannot sufficiently reward, but by your gracious assistance. I entreat you therefore to make him a † denizen of Rome; for as he is the freedman of a foreigner, he is, consequently, himself also a foreigner. His name is Harpocras; his patroness (who has been dead a considerable time) was Thermuthis the daughter of Theon. I farther entreat you to bestow the full privileges of a Roman citizen upon Helia and Antonia Harmeris

* The physicians among the ancients were distinguished according to the particular branch of practice to which they confined themselves. The physician here mentioned, Pliny calls *iatriaptes*, that is, one who applied external unctions.

† There was a difference between the *jus civitatis* and the *jus Quiritium*; the former not extending to the same privileges as the latter, which comprehended whatever advantages a free native of Rome was entitled to; just in the same manner as with us, there is a distinction between denization and naturalization.

the freedwomen of Antonia Maximilla, a lady of great merit. It is at her desire * I make this request.

Epist. VII. [xxii.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

I Return you thanks, Sir, for your ready compliance with my desire, in granting the complete privileges of a Roman, to the freedwomen of a lady to whom I am allied, and making Harpocras my physician a denizen of Rome. But when, agreeable to your directions, I gave in an account of his age and estate, I was informed by those who are better skilled in these affairs than I pretend to be, that, as he is an Egyptian, I ought first to have obtained for him the freedom of Alexandria, before he was made free of Rome. I confess, indeed, as I was ignorant of any difference in this case between those of † Egypt and other countries, I contented myself with only acquainting you, that he had been manumized by a foreign lady, long since deceased. However, it is an ignorance I cannot regret, since it affords me an opportunity of receiving from you a double

* Pliny mentions his request to be at the particular desire of Maximilla, because nothing of this kind could legally be granted to a freedman, without the consent of his patron; a name which was given to the master of a slave who had been made free.

† Upon what occasion the honour of this peculiar distinction was granted in favour of Alexandria does not appear; possibly it might be in gratitude to a country to which the Romans were so highly obliged, being supplied with the greatest part of their corn from Egypt. This city, founded by Alexander the Great, was esteemed the most considerable in the world next to that of Rome. It is now called *Scanderick*.

obligation

obligation in favour of the same person. That I may legally therefore enjoy the benefit of your goodness, I beg you would be pleased to grant him the freedom of the city of Alexandria, as well as that of Rome. And that your gracious intentions may not meet with any farther obstacles, I have taken care, as you directed, to send an account to your freedman of his age and fortunes.

Epist. VIII. [xxiii.] The Emperor TRAJAN
to PLINY.

IT is my resolution, in pursuance of the maxim observed by the princes my predecessors, to be extremely cautious in granting the freedom of the city of Alexandria: however, since you have obtained of me the freedom of Rome for your physician Harpocras, I cannot refuse you this other request. You must let me know to what district he belongs, that I may give you a letter to my good friend Pompeius Planta, governor of Egypt.

Epist. IX. [v.] PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Cannot express, Sir, the pleasure your letter gave me, by which I am informed that you have made my physician Harpocras a denizen of Alexandria; notwithstanding your resolution to follow the maxim of your predecessors in this point, by being extremely cautious in granting that privilege. Agreeably to your directions, I acquaint you that Harpocras belongs to the district of Memphis. I entreat you then, most gracious Emperor, to send me, as you promised, a letter to your good friend Pompeius Planta, governor of Egypt.

As I purpose (in order to have the earliest enjoyment of your presence, so ardently wished for

here) to come to meet you; I beg, Sir, you would permit me to extend my journey as far as possible.

Epist. X. [vi.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

I Was greatly obliged, Sir, in my late indisposition, to Posthumius Marinus, my physician; and I can only make him a suitable return, by the assistance of your gracious indulgence. I entreat you then to make Chrysippus Mithridates and his wife Stratonica, (who are related to Marinus), denizens of Rome. I implore likewise the same privilege in favour of Epigonus and Mithridates, the two sons of Chrysippus; but in such manner, * that they may be under the dominion of their father, and yet preserve their right of patronage over their own freedmen. I farther entreat you to grant the full privileges of a Roman

* The extensive power of paternal authority was (as has been observed in the notes above) peculiar to the Romans. But after Chrysippus was made a denizen of Rome, he was not, it should seem, consequentially entitled to that privilege over those children which were born before his denization. On the other hand, if it was expressly granted him, his children could not preserve their right of patronage over their own freedmen, because that right would of course devolve to their father, by means of this acquired dominion over them. The denization therefore of his children is as expressly solicited as his own. But both parties becoming *Quirites*, the children by this creation, and not pleading in right of their father, would be *patres fam.* To prevent which the clause is added, *ita ut sint in patris potestate*; as there is another to save to them their rights of patronage over their freedmen, though they were reduced in *patriam potestatem*.

to

to L. Satrius Abascantius, P. Cæsius Phosphorus, and Pancharia Soteris. This request I make with the consent of their patrons.

Epist. XI. [xxiv.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

AFTER your late sacred father, Sir, had, in a noble speech, as well as by his own generous example, exhorted and encouraged the public to acts of munificence; I implored his permission to remove the several statues which I had of the former emperors, to * my corporation; and at the same time begged the liberty of adding his own to the number. For as I had hitherto continued them in the respective places wherein they stood when they were left to me by several different inheritances, they were dispersed in distant parts of my estate. He was pleased to grant my request, and at the same time to give me a very ample testimony of his approbation. I immediately therefore wrote to the decurii, that they would allot a piece of ground, upon which I might build a temple at my own expense; but as a mark of honour to my design, they offered me the choice of any site I thought proper. However, my own indisposition in the first place, and afterward that of your father, together with the duties of that post with which you were both pleased to intrust me, prevented my going on with that design. But I have now, I think, a convenient opportunity of making an excursion for that purpose, as my monthly attendance

* It is highly probable, upon comparing let. 4. b. 3. and let. 1. b. 4. that by the corporation here mentioned, Pliny means Tifernum, Tiberinum, or Citta di Castella, as it is now called; which city had put itself under his patronage and protection.

ends on the first of * September, and there are several festivals in the month following. My first request then is, that you would permit me to adorn the temple I am going to erect, with your statue; and next (in order to execute my design with all the expedition possible) that you would indulge me with leave of absence. It would ill become the sincerity I profess, were I to dissemble, that your goodness in complying with this desire, will at the same time be extremely serviceable to me in my own private affairs. It is absolutely necessary I should not defer any longer the letting of my lands in that province; for, besides that they amount to above † four hundred thousand sesterces, the time for dressing the vineyards is approaching, and that care must fall upon my new tenants. The badness of the season likewise for several years past, obliges me to think of making some abatements in my rents; which I cannot possibly settle unless I am present. I shall be indebted then to your indulgence, Sir,

* Pliny enjoyed the office of treasurer in conjunction with Cornutus Tertullus. It was the custom at Rome for those who had colleagues to administer the duties of their posts by monthly turns. *Buchnerus.*

† About 3200 l. Sterling; the annual income of Pliny's estate in Tuscany. He mentions another near Comum in the duchy of Milan, the yearly value of which does not appear. We find him likewise considering about the purchase of an estate, for which he wants to give about 24,000 l. of our money; but whether he ever completed that purchase, is uncertain. [See book 3. let. 19.]. This however we are sure of, that his fortunes were but moderate, considering his high station and necessary expenses: [See book 2. let. 4.]; and yet, by the advantage of a judicious œconomy, we have seen him, in the course of these letters, exercising a liberality, of which after-ages have furnished no parallel.

both

both as forwarding this public act of piety, and giving me the opportunity of settling my private affairs, if you will be pleased to grant me * leave to be absent for thirty days. I cannot limit a shorter time, as the town and the estate of which I am speaking, lie above an hundred and fifty miles from Rome.

Epist. XII. [xxv.] **TRAJAN to PLINY.**

YOU have given me many reasons both of a public and private nature, why you desire leave to be absent; but I need no other than that it is your inclination: and I doubt not of your returning as soon as possible to the duty of an office which so much requires your attendance. As I would not seem to check any instance of your affection towards me, I shall not oppose your erecting my statue in the place you mention; though, in general, I am extremely cautious in giving any encouragement to honours of that kind.

Epist. XIII. [viii.] **PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.**

AS I am sensible, Sir, that the highest applause my actions can receive, is to be distinguished by so excellent a prince; I beg you would be graciously pleased to add either the office of augur or septemvir (both which are now vacant) to the dignity I already enjoy by your indulgence; that I may have the satisfaction of

* The senators were not allowed to go from Rome into the provinces, without having first obtained leave of the emperor. Sicily, however, had the privilege to be excepted out of that law; as Gallia Narbonensis afterwards was, by Claudius Cæsar. Tacit. ann. 12. c. 23.

publicly offering up those vows for your prosperity, from the duty of my office, which I daily prefer to the gods in private, from the affection of my heart.

*Epist. XIV. [xxvi.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.*

HAVING safely passed the promontory of Mælea, I am arrived at Ephesus with all my train, notwithstanding I was detained for some time by contrary winds: an information, Sir, in which, I trust, you will think yourself concerned. I design to pursue the remainder of my journey to the * province, partly in light vessels, and partly in post-chaises: for as the excessive heats will prevent my travelling altogether by land, so the Etesian winds, which are now set in, will not permit me to proceed entirely by sea.

Epist. XV. [xxvii.] TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOUR information, my dear Pliny, was extremely agreeable to me; as it is much my concern to know in what manner you arrive at your province. I well approve of your intention to travel either by sea or land, as you shall find most convenient.

* Bithynia, a province in Anatolia, or Asia the Less, of which Pliny was appointed governor by Trajan, in the 6th year of his reign, A. D. 103; not as an ordinary proconsul, but as that emperor's own lieutenant, with extraordinary powers. [See Dio.] The following letters were written during his administration of that province.



Epist.

Epist. XVI. [xxviii.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

AS I had a very favourable voyage to Ephesus, so in travelling post from thence I was extremely incommoded by the heats, which threw me into a fever, and kept me some time at Pergamum. From thence, Sir, I took ship again; but being detained by contrary winds, I did not arrive at Bithynia so soon as I hoped *. However, I have no reason to complain of this delay, since (which indeed was the most auspicious circumstance that could attend me) I reached the province in time to celebrate your birthday. I am at present engaged in examining into the finances of the Prusenses, their disbursements and credits; and the farther I proceed in this affair, the more I am convinced of the necessity of my inquiry. Several large sums of money are owing to the city from private persons, which they neglect to pay upon various pretences; as, on the other hand, I find the public funds are, in some instances, very unwarrantably applied. This, Sir, I write to you immediately on my arrival. I entered this province on the 17th of † September,

* The original adds, *id est, xv Calend. Octobris*, which seems to have crept into the text from the marginal annotation of some glossarist: for as Pliny mentions the time of his arrival a little lower, there is no occasion for it in this place; and it is not agreeable to his usual elegant conciseness, to repeat that circumstance twice in the same letter. Or perhaps here are two distinct letters run into one by the carelessness of the transcribers; the former ending with *Hæc, &c. in ipso ingressu meo scripsi*; the latter beginning with *Quintodecimo Calend. &c.*

† In the sixth year of Trajan's reign, A. D. 103,
and

ber, and found it in those sentiments of obedience and loyalty, which you justly merit from all mankind. You will consider, Sir, whether it would not be proper to send hither a surveyor; for I am inclined to think, much might be deducted from what is charged by those who have the conduct of the public works, if a faithful admeasurement were to be taken: at least I am of that opinion from what I have already seen of the accounts of this city, which I am now examining, with the assistance of Maximus.

Epist. XVII. [xxix.] TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Should have rejoiced to have heard, that you arrived at Bithynia without inconvenience to yourself or any of your train; and that your journey from Ephesus had been as easy, as your voyage to that place was favourable. For the rest, your letter informs me, my dear Pliny, what day you reached Bithynia. The people of that province will be convinced, I persuade myself, that I am attentive to their interest; as your conduct towards them will make it manifest, that I could have chosen no person more proper to supply my place. Your first inquiry ought, no doubt, to turn upon the state of the public finances; for that they have been abused, is but too evident. I have scarce surveyors enough to inspect those works which I am carrying on at Rome, and in the neighbourhood: but persons of integrity and skill in this art may be found, most certainly, in every province; so that you cannot be at a loss in that point, if you will make due inquiry.

and the 41st of our author's age: he continued in this province about eighteen months. Vid. Mass. in vit. Plin. 129,

Epist.

Epist. XVIII. [vii.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THough I am well assured, Sir, that you, who never forget any opportunity of exercising your generosity, are not unmindful of the request I lately made you; yet since you have frequently, among many other instances of your indulgence, permitted me to repeat my solicitations to you, I do so now on behalf of Accius Sura; and I earnestly beseech you to honour him with the prætorship, which is at present vacant. Though his ambition is extremely moderate, yet the quality of his birth, the inflexible integrity which he has shewn in a fortune below mediocrity, and, above all, the happiness of your times, which gives courage to conscious virtue to claim the indulgence of your favour, prompts him to hope he may experience it in this instance.

Epist. XIX. [ix.] PLINY to the Emperor TRA-
JAN.

I Congratulate both you and the public, most excellent Emperor, upon the great and glorious victory you have obtained; so agreeable to the heroism of ancient Rome. May the immortal gods give the same happy success to all your designs, that, under the administration of so many princely virtues, the splendour of the empire may shine out, not only in its former, but with additional lustre*.

* It is probable the victory here alluded to, was that famous one which Trajan gained over the Dacians. It is certain at least, Pliny lived to see his wish accomplished, this emperor having carried the Roman splendour to its highest pitch, and extended the dominions of the empire farther than any of his predecessors; as after his death it began to decline.

Epist.

Epist. XX. [x.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

MY lieutenant Servilius Pudens came to Nicomedia, Sir, on the 24th of November; and by his arrival freed me, at last, from the solicitude of a very uneasy expectation.

Epist. XXI. [xi.] PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

YOUR generosity to me, Sir, was the occasion of uniting me to Roslanus Geminus, by the strongest ties; for he was my quæstor when I was consul. His behaviour to me during the continuance of our offices, was highly respectful; and he has treated me ever since with so peculiar a regard, that besides the many obligations I owe him upon a public account, I am indebted to him for the strongest pledges of private friendship. I entreat you then to comply with my request for the advancement of one, whom (if my recommendation has any weight) you will even honour with your particular favour; as whatever trust you shall repose in him, he will endeavour to shew himself still deserving of an higher. But I forbear to enter into a more particular detail of his merit; being persuaded, his integrity, his probity, and his vigilance are well known to you, not only from those high posts which he has exercised in Rome within your immediate inspection, but from his behaviour when he served under you in the army. One thing, however, my affection for him inclines me to think I have not yet sufficiently done; and therefore, Sir, I repeat my entreaties to you, that you will give me the pleasure, as early as possible, of rejoicing in the honourable advancement of my quæstor; or, in other

other words, of receiving an addition to my own dignity, in the person of my friend.

Epist. XXII. [xii.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

IT is not easy, Sir, to express the joy I received, when I heard you had, in compliance with the request of my mother-in-law and myself, granted Cælius Clemens the proconsulship of this province, after the expiration of his consular office; as it is from thence I learn the full extent of your beneficence towards me, which thus graciously spreads itself through my whole family. I dare not pretend to make an equal return to those obligations I so justly owe you. I can only therefore have recourse to vows, and ardently implore the gods, that I may not be found unworthy of those favours which you are continually bestowing upon me.

Epist. XXIII. [xiii.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

I Received, Sir, a dispatch from your freedman Lycormas, desiring me, if any embassy from Bosporus should come hither in the way to Rome, that I would detain it till his arrival. None has yet arrived; at least in the city where I am. But a courier passing through this place from the king of Sarmatia, I lay hold of that opportunity, which accidentally offers itself, of sending with him the messenger which Lycormas dispatched hither; that you might be informed by both their letters of what, perhaps, it may be necessary you should be acquainted with at one and the same time.

Epist. XXIV. [xiv.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

I Am informed by a letter from the king of Sarmatia, that some affairs have happened

that require your immediate knowledge. With design therefore to expedite the dispatches which his courier was charged with to you, I granted him an order to make use of the public post *.

Epist. XXV. [xv.] PLINY TO TRAJAN.

THE ambassador from the king of Sarmatia having voluntarily staid two days at Nicea, where he found me, I did not think it reasonable, Sir, to detain him any longer; not only because it was still uncertain when your freedman Lycormas would arrive, but as some indispensable affairs require my presence in a different part of the province. Of this I thought it necessary that you should be informed, because I lately acquainted you in a letter, that Lycormas had de-

* The first invention of public couriers is ascribed to Cyrus, who, in order to receive the earliest intelligence from the governors of the several provinces, erected posthouses throughout the kingdom of Persia, at equal distances, which supplied men and horses to forward the public dispatches. Augustus was the first who introduced this most useful institution among the Romans, by employing post-chaïses, disposed at convenient distances, for the purpose of political intelligence. The magistrates of every city were obliged to furnish horses for these messengers, upon producing a diploma, or a kind of warrant, either from the emperor himself, or from those who had that authority under him. Sometimes, though upon very extraordinary occasions, persons who travelled upon their private affairs, were allowed the use of these post-chaïses. [See epist. 121. of this book]. It is surprising they were not sooner used for the purposes of commerce and private communication. Louis XI. first established them in France, in the year 1474; but it was not till the 12th of Car. II. that the post-office was settled in England by act of parliament.

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fired, if any embassy should come this way from Bosphorus, that I would detain it till his arrival. But I did not see there was any pretence of retarding him any longer; especially as the dispatches from Lycornas which (as I mentioned before) I was not willing to detain, would probably reach you some days sooner than this ambassador.

Epist. XXVI. [xvi.] PLINY TO TRAJAN.

I Received a letter, Sir, from Apuleius, an officer in the army, belonging to the garrison at Nicomedia, informing me that one Callidromus being arrested by Maximus and Dionysius, (two persons who exercise the trade of bakers, to whom he had hired himself), fled for refuge to your statue*: that being brought before a magistrate, he declared he was formerly slave to Laberius Maximus; but being taken prisoner by Sufagus in Moesia, he was sent as a present from Decebalus to Pacorus king of Parthia, in whose service he continued several years, from whence he made his escape, and came to Nicomedia. When he was examined before me, he confirmed this account; for which reason I thought it

* Particular temples, altars, and statues were allowed among the Romans as places of privilege and sanctuary to slaves, debtors, and malefactors. This custom was introduced by Romulus, who borrowed it probably from the Greeks; but, during the free state of Rome, few of these asylums were permitted. This custom prevailed most under the emperors, till it grew so scandalous, that the emperor Pius found it necessary to restrain those privileged places by an edict. See Lipsii excurs. ad Taciti an. 3. c. 36.

necessary to * send him to you. This I should have done sooner, but I deferred his journey in order to make an inquiry after a gem which he said was taken from him, upon which was engraven the figure of Pacorus in his royal habit: I was desirous (if it could have been found) of transmitting this curiosity to you at the same time; as I have a small ingot of Parthian gold, which he says he brought from thence out of the mines. I have fixed my seal to it, the impression of which is a chariot drawn by four horses.

Epist. XXVII. [xvii.] PLINY to TRAJAN.

YOUR freedman and procurator, Maximus, behaved, Sir, during all the time we were together, with great probity, care, and diligence; as one strongly attached to your interest, and strictly observant of discipline. This testimony I willingly give him; and I do it with all the fidelity I owe you.

Epist. XXVIII. [xviii.] PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

AFTER having experienced, Sir, in Gabius Bassus, who commands on the frontiers of Pontica, the greatest integrity, honour, and vigilance, as well as the most particular respect to myself, I cannot refuse him my best wishes and suffrage; and I give them to him with all that fidelity which is due to you. I have found

* The second expedition of Trajan against Decabalus, was undertaken the same year that Pliny went governor into this province: the reason therefore why Pliny sent this Callidromus to the Emperor seems to be, that some use might possibly be made of him in favour of that design.

him

him abundantly qualified by having served in the army under you; and it is owing to the advantages of your discipline, that he has learned to merit the honour of your favour. The soldiery and the people here, who have had full experience of his justice and humanity, endeavour to rival each other in that glorious testimony they give of him, as well in public as in private; and I certify this with all the sincerity you have a right to expect from me.

Epist. XXIX. [xix.] PLINY TO TRAJAN.

Nymphidius Lupus *, Sir, and myself served in the army together; he commanded a body of the auxiliary forces at the same time that I was military tribune; and it was from thence my affection for him began. A long acquaintance hath since mutually endeared and strengthened our friendship. For this reason I did violence to his repose, and insisted upon his attending me into bithynia, as my assessor in council. He most readily granted me this proof of his friendship; and without any regard to the plea of age, or the ease of retirement, he shared with me the fatigue of business; and upon all occasions is still ready to give me his assistance. I look upon his relations therefore as my own; in which number Nymphidius Lupus, his son, claims my particular notice. He is a youth of great merit and indefatigable application; and, in every view of his character, well worthy of so excellent a father. That he is equal to any

* The text calls him *Primipilarem*; that is, one who had been *Primipilus*, an officer in the army; whose post was both highly honourable and profitable. Among other parts of his office he had the care of the eagle, or chief standard of the legion.

honour you shall think proper to confer upon him, the early proof he gave of his qualifications, when he commanded the troops of the allies, will easily convince you; as it gained him the full applause of those most illustrious personages Julius Ferox, and Fuscus Salinator. And I will add, Sir, that any increase of dignity which he shall receive, will be an occasion of particular congratulation to myself.

Epist. XXX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Beg your determination, Sir, in a point wherein I am greatly doubtful. It is, whether I should place the public slaves as centinels round the prisons of the several cities in this province, (as has been hitherto the practice), or employ a party of soldiers for that purpose? On the one hand, I am afraid the public slaves will not attend this duty with the fidelity they ought; and, on the other, that it will engage too large a body of the soldiery: in the mean while, I have joined a few of the latter with the former. I suspect, however, there may be some danger that this method will occasion a general neglect of duty, as it will afford them a mutual pretence of throwing the blame upon each other.

Epist. XXXI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THere is no occasion, my dear Pliny, to draw off any * soldiers in order to guard the pri-

* In the original it is *commilitones*, "my fellow-soldiers:" an appellation which those emperors who desired to be well with the army affected to use. Suetonius informs us, that Augustus would never employ that expression, as thinking it a condescension unbecoming his dignity; and neither suitable to the tranquillity of the times, nor to military discipline.

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sons. Let us rather persevere in the ancient customs observed by this province, of employing the public slaves for that purpose : and the fidelity with which they shall execute their duty, will depend much upon your care and strict discipline. It is greatly to be feared, as you observe, if the soldiers should be mixed with the public slaves, they will mutually trust to each other, and by that means grow so much the more negligent. But the principal objection I have, is, that as few soldiers as possible should be called off from their colours.

Epist. XXXII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

GAbius Bassus, who commands upon the frontiers of Pontica, in a manner suitable to the respect and duty which he owes you, has been with me, Sir, for several days. As far as I could observe, he is a person of great merit and worthy of your favour. I acquainted him it was your order that he should retain only ten * beneficiary soldiers, two horse-guards, and one captain out of the troops which you were pleased to assign to my command. He assured me these

* The most probable conjecture (for it is a point of a good deal of obscurity) concerning the *beneficarii*, seems to be, that they were a certain number of soldiers exempted from the usual duty of their office, in order to be employed as a sort of body-guards to the general. These were probably foot ; as the *equites* here mentioned were perhaps of the same nature, only that they served on horseback. *Equites singulares Caesaris, Augusti, &c.* are frequently met with upon ancient inscriptions, and are generally supposed to mean the body-guards of the emperor.

would

would not be sufficient for him, and that he would write to you upon this head: for which reason I did not immediately, upon your directions, recall his supernumeraries.

Epist. XXXIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Have received from Gabius Bassus the letter you mention, acquainting me that the number of soldiers I had ordered him was not sufficient: and for your information I have directed my answer to be annexed to this. It is very material to distinguish between what the exigency of affairs requires, and what an ambitious desire of extending power may think necessary. As for ourselves, the interest of the public must be our only guide: accordingly it is incumbent upon us to take all possible care, that the soldiers are not absent from their colours.

Epist. XXXIV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE Prusenses, Sir, have an ancient and ruinous bath, which they desire your leave to repair. Upon examining into the condition of it, I find it ought to be rebuilt. I think therefore you may indulge them in this request, as there will be a sufficient fund for that purpose, partly from those debts which are due from * private persons to the public, which I am now calling in; and partly from what they raise among themselves towards furnishing the bath with oil, which they are willing to apply to the carrying on of this building: a work which the dignity of the city, and the splendour of your times seems to demand.

* See letter 28. of this book.

Epist.

Epist. XXXV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IF the erecting a public bath will not be too great a charge upon the Prusenses, we may comply with their request; provided, however, that no new tax be levied for this purpose, nor any of those taken off which are applied for necessary services.

Epist. XXXVI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Am assured, Sir, by your freedman and receiver-general Maximus, that it is necessary he should have a party of soldiers assigned to him, over and besides the *beneficarii* *, which, by your orders, I allotted to the very worthy Gemellinus. Those therefore which I found in his service I thought proper to continue there, especially as he was going into Paphlagonia in order to procure corn. For his better security likewise, and because it was his request, I added two of the horse-guards. But I beg you would inform me, in your next dispatches, what method you would have me observe for the future in points of this nature.

Epist. XXXVII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

AS my freedman Maximus was going upon an extraordinary commission to procure corn, I approve of your having supplied him with a file of soldiers. But when he shall return to the duties of his former post, I think two from you, and as many from my receiver-general Virbius Gemellinus, (to whom he is coadjutor), will be sufficient.

* See letter 32. of this book in note.

Epist.

Epist. XXXVIII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

SEmpronius Cælianus, (whose merit I must always mention with esteem), having discovered two * slaves among the recruits, has sent them to me. But I deferred passing sentence till I had conferred with you, the glorious founder and firm support of military discipline, concerning the punishment proper to be inflicted upon them. My principal doubt is, that though they have taken the military oath, they are not yet entered into any particular legion. I beg therefore, Sir, you would let me know what method I shall pursue, especially as it is an affair in which example is concerned.

* The Roman policy excluded slaves from entering into military service, and it was death if they did so. However, upon cases of great necessity, this maxim was dispensed with; but then they were first made free before they were received into the army, excepting only (as Servius in his notes upon Virgil observes) after the fatal battle of Cannæ; when the public distress was so great, that the Romans recruited their army with their slaves, though they had not time to give them their freedom. One reason, perhaps, of this policy might be, that they did not think it safe to arm so considerable a body of men, whose numbers in the times when the Roman luxury was highest, we may have some idea of, by the instance which Pliny the naturalist mentions of Claudius Isodorus, who at the time of his death was possessed of no less than 4116 slaves, notwithstanding he had lost great numbers in the civil wars. *Plin. Hist. Nat. 33. 10. Mœurs des Romains.*

Epist.

Epist. XXXIX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

SEmpronius Cælianus has acted agreeably to my orders, in sending such persons to be tried before you as appear to deserve capital punishment. It is material however, in the case in question, to inquire, whether these slaves insisted themselves voluntarily, or were chosen by the officers, or presented as proxies for others. If they were chosen, the officer is guilty; if they are proxies, the blame rests with those who deputed them; but if, conscious of the legal incapacities of their station, they presented themselves voluntarily, the punishment must fall upon their own heads. That they are not yet entered into any legion, makes no great difference in their case; for they ought to have given a true account of themselves immediately upon their being approved as fit for the service.

Epist. XL. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

AS I have your permission, Sir, to address myself to you in all my doubts, you will not esteem it below your dignity to descend to those affairs which concern the administration of my post. I find there are in several cities, particularly those of Nicomedia and Nicea, certain persons who take upon themselves to act as public slaves, and receive an annual stipend accordingly; notwithstanding they have been condemned either to the mines, the * public games, or other punishments of the like nature. Ha-

* A punishment among the Romans, usually inflicted upon slaves, by which they were to engage with wild beasts, or perform the part of gladiators in the public shews.

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ving received information of this abuse, I have been long debating with myself how I should act. On the one hand, to send them back again to their respective punishments, (many of them being now grown old, and behaving, as I am assured, with sobriety and modesty), would, I thought, be proceeding against them too severely; on the other, to retain convicted criminals in the public service, seemed not altogether so decent. I considered at the same time, to support these people in idleness, would be an useless expense to the public; and to leave them to starve, would be dangerous. I was obliged therefore to suspend the determination of this matter, till I could consult with you. You will be desirous, perhaps, to be informed how it happened that these persons escaped the punishments to which they were condemned. This inquiry I have also made myself, but cannot return you any satisfactory answer. The decrees against them were indeed produced; but no record appears of their having ever been reversed. It was asserted, however, that these people were pardoned upon their petition to the proconsuls, or their lieutenants; which seems likely enough to be the truth, as it is improbable any person should have dared to set them at liberty without authority.

Epist. XLI. TRAJAN TO PLINY.

YOU will remember you were sent into Bithynia, for the particular purpose of correcting these many abuses with which it appeared to be over-run. Now none stands more in need of reformation, than that criminals, who have been sentenced to punishment, should, not only be set at liberty (as your letter informs me) without authority; but even appointed to employments,

ployments, which ought alone to be exercised by persons whose characters are irreproachable. Those therefore among them who have been convicted within these ten years, and whose sentence has not been reversed by proper authority, must be sent back again to their respective punishments: but where more than ten years have elapsed since their conviction, and they are grown old and infirm, let them be disposed of in such employments as are but few degrees removed from the punishments to which they were sentenced; that is, either to attend upon the public baths, cleanse the common shores, or repair the streets and highways, the usual offices to which such persons are assigned.

Epist. XLII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WHILE I was making a progress in a different part of the province, a prodigious fire broke out at Nicomedia, which not only consumed several private houses, but also two public buildings, the town-house and the temple of Isis, though they stood on contrary sides of the street. The occasion of its spreading thus far, was partly owing to the violence of the wind, and partly to the indolence of the people, who, I am well assured, stood fixed and idle spectators of this terrible calamity. The truth is, the city was not provided either with * engines, buckets, or

* It has been generally imagined that the ancients had not the art of raising water by engines; but this passage seems to favour the contrary opinion. The word in the original is *sipho*, which Heiychius explains (as one of the commentators observes) *instrumentum ad jaculandas aquas adversus incendia*; "an instrument to throw up water against fires." But there is a passage in Seneca which seems to put this

or any one single instrument proper to extinguish fires; which I have now however given directions to have prepared. You will consider, Sir, whether it may not be adviseable to institute a company of firemen, consisting only of one hundred and fifty members. I will take care none but those of that business shall be admitted into it; and that the privileges granted them shall not be extended to any other purpose. As this incorporated body will consist of so small a number, it will be easy enough to keep them under proper regulation.

Epist. XLIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU are of opinion it would be proper to constitute a company of firemen in Nicomedia, agreeably to what has been practised in several other cities. But it is to be remembered, that this sort of societies have greatly disturbed the peace of that province in general, and of those cities in particular. Whatever name we give them, and for whatever purposes they may be founded, they will not fail to form themselves into assemblies, however short their meetings may be. It will therefore be safer, to provide such machines as are of service in extinguishing fires, injoining the owners of houses to assist up-

matter beyond conjecture, though none of the critics upon this place have taken notice of it: *Solemus*, says he, *duabus manibus inter se junctis aquam concipere, et compressa utrinque palma in modum siphonis exprimere*, [Q. N. l. 2. 16.]; where we plainly see the use of this *sipho* was to throw up water, and consequently the Romans were acquainted with that art. The account which Pliny gives of his fountains at *Tusculum* is likewise another evident proof.

on such occasions; and if it shall be necessary, to call in the help of the populace.

Epist. XLIV. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

WE have acquitted, Sir, and renewed our * vows, for your prosperity, in which that of the public is necessarily included; imploring the gods to grant us ever thus to pay, and thus to repeat them.

Epist. XLV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Received the satisfaction, my dear Pliny, of being informed by your letter, that you, together with the people under your government, have both paid and renewed your vows to the immortal gods, for my health and happiness.

Epist. XLVI. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THE city of Nicomedia, Sir, have expended three millions three hundred and twenty nine sesterces building an aquæduct; but, not being able to finish it, the works are entirely falling to ruin. They made a second attempt in another place, where they laid out two millions. But this likewise is discontinued; so that, after having been at an immense charge to no purpose, they must still be at a farther expense, in order to be accommodated with water. I have examined a fine spring from whence the water may be conveyed over arches (as was done in their first design), in such a manner that the

* This was an anniversary custom observed throughout the empire, on the 30th of December.

higher, as well as level and low parts of the city may be supplied. There are but very few of the old arches remaining; the square stones, however, employed in the former building, may be used in turning the new ones. I am of opinion part should be raised with brick, as that will be the easier and cheaper method. But that this work may not be carried on with the same ill success as the former, it will be necessary to send here an architect and an engineer. And I will venture to say, from the beauty and usefulness of the design, it will be a work well worthy the splendour of your times.

Epist. XLVII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

CARE must be taken to supply the city of Nicomedia with water; and you will do so, I am well persuaded, with all the diligence you ought. But it is most certainly no less incumbent upon you to examine, by whose misconduct it has happened, that such large sums have been thrown away upon this work, lest, by applying the money to private purposes, this aquæduct should likewise be left unfinished. You will let me know the result of your inquiry.

Epist. XLVIII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE citizens of Nicea, Sir, are building a theatre, which, though it is not yet finished, has already exhausted, as I am informed, (for I have not examined the account myself), above * ten millions of sesterces; and what is worse, I fear

* About 80,000 l. of our money. To those who are not acquainted with the immense riches of the ancients,

fear to no purpose. For either from the foundation being laid in a marshy ground, or that the stones themselves were decayed, the walls are cracked from top to bottom. It deserves your consideration therefore, whether it be best to carry on this work, or entirely discontinue it; or rather, perhaps, whether it would not be most prudent absolutely to destroy it: for the foundations upon which this building is immediately supported, appear to me more expensive than solid. Several private persons have undertaken to build the compartments of this theatre at their own expense, some engaging to erect the portico, others the galleries beyond the pit*: but this design cannot be executed, as the principal fabric is now at a stand. This
city

ancients, it may seem incredible, that a city, not the capital one neither, of a conquered province, should expend so large a sum of money, upon only the shell (as it appears to be) of a theatre: but Asia was esteemed the most considerable part of the world for wealth; its fertility and exportations (as Tully observes) exceeding that of all other countries. The ingenious Dr Arbuthnot quotes an instance from Athenæus of Asiatic riches, which a man must be a tolerable arithmetician even to count. It is the value of the treasure of Sardanapalus, with which he made a funeral pile for himself and family when he was besieged by Arbaces king of the Medes. "Athenæus makes
" the value of the treasure of this pile to amount to
" 100,000,000 talents, which reckoned in Babylonian
" talents, amounts to 16,953,125,000 l. This was
" only the value of the silver; there was besides a
" tenth part of that number of talents of gold, which,
" if gold was reckoned in a decuple proportion, will
" just double that sum." *Arbuth. anc. coins.*
p. 203.

* The word *cavea* in the original, comprehends more than we call the *pit* in our theatres, as it means

city is also rebuilding, upon a more enlarged plan, the gymnasium *, which was burnt down before my arrival in the province. They have already been at some (and, I doubt, a fruitless) expense. The structure is not only irregular and ill disposed, but the present architect (who it must be owned is a rival to the person who was first employed) asserts, that the walls, though they are twenty-two feet thick, are not strong enough to support the superstructure, as they are not incruusted without, nor the intermediate space properly cemented within. The inhabitants of Claudopolis are sinking (for I cannot call it erecting) a large public bath, upon a low spot of ground which lies at the foot of a mountain. The fund appropriated for the carrying on this work, arises from the money which those honorary members you were pleased to add to their senate, paid (or at least are ready to pay whenever I call upon them) † for their admission. As I am afraid therefore the public money in one place, and (what is infinitely more valuable than any pecuniary consideration) your beneficence in the other, should be ill applied, I am obliged to desire you would send hither an architect to inspect, not only the theatre, but the

the whole space in which the spectators sat. These theatres being open at top, the galleries here mentioned were for the convenience of retiring in bad weather.

* A place in which the athletic exercises were performed, and where the philosophers also used to read their lectures.

† The honorary senators, that is, such as were not received into the council of the city by election, but by the appointment of the emperor, paid a certain sum of money upon their admission into the senate.

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bath; in order to consider whether, after all the expense which has already been laid out, it will be better to finish them upon the present plan, or reform the one, and remove the other: for otherwise we may possibly throw away our future cost, by endeavouring not to lose what we have already expended.

Epist. XLIX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU who are upon the spot, will best be able to consider and determine what is proper to be done concerning the theatre, which the inhabitants of Nicea are building; as for myself, it will be sufficient if you let me know your resolution. With respect to the particular parts of this theatre which are to be raised at a private charge; you will see those engagements fulfilled, when the body of the building, to which they are to be annexed, shall be finished. — These paltry Greeks are, I know, immoderately fond of gymnastic diversions, and therefore, perhaps, the citizens of Nicea have enlarged their fabric for this purpose beyond its due proportion; however, they must be contented with such a one as will be sufficient to answer their occasions.

I entirely leave it to you to persuade the Claudiopolitani as you shall think proper, with relation to their bath, which they have placed, it seems, in a very improper situation. As there is no province that is not furnished with men of skill and ingenuity, you cannot possibly want architects; unless you think it the shortest way to get them from Rome, when it is generally from Greece that they come hither.

Epist.

Epist. L. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WHEN I reflect upon the splendour of your exalted station, and the greatness of your mind, nothing, I am persuaded, can be more suitable to both, than to point out to you such designs as are worthy of your glorious and immortal name, as being no less useful than magnificent. Bordering upon the territories of the city of Nicomedia is a most extensive lake; upon which the commodities of the country are easily and cheaply transported to the high road; but from thence are conveyed in carriages to the sea-side, at great charge and labour. To remedy this inconvenience, it will require, it is true, many hands; but upon such an occasion they cannot be scarce: for the country, and particularly the city, is exceedingly populous: and one may assuredly hope, that every body will readily engage in a work which will be of universal benefit. It only remains then to send hither, if you shall think proper, a surveyor or an architect, in order to examine whether the lakes lie above the level of the sea; the engineers of this province being of opinion that the former is higher by forty * cubits. I find there is in the neighbourhood of this place, a large canal, which was cut by one of the kings of this country; but as it is left unfinished, it is uncertain whether it was for the purpose of draining the adjacent lands, or making a communication between the lake and the river. It is equally doubtful too, whether the death of the king, or the despair of being able to accomplish the design, prevented the completion of it. If this was the reason, I am so much the

* A Roman cubit is equal to 1 foot 5 inches $\frac{406}{783}$ of our measure. *Arbutnot's tab.*

more desirous, for the sake of your illustrious character, (and I hope you will pardon me the ambition), that you may have the glory of executing what kings * could only attempt.

Epist. LI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THERE is something in the scheme you propose of opening a communication between the lake and the sea, which may, perhaps, tempt me to come into it. But you must first carefully examine the situation of this body of water, what quantity it contains, and from whence it is supplied; lest, by letting it into the sea, it should be totally exhausted. You may apply to Calphurnius Macer for an engineer; as I will also send you from hence, some persons skilled in works of this nature.

Epist. LII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

UPON examining the expenses of the city of Byzantium, (which I find are extremely great), I was informed, Sir, that the appoint-

* A commentator upon this passage thinks this a very extraordinary compliment; "As if," says he, "an emperor of Rome could not do more than a little king of Bithynia." But it is much more probable that this critic should be mistaken in his objection, than Pliny in his compliment; and though he will have it to be a little king, it is more reasonable to suppose our author meant some great king of Persia. Besides, *Imperator*, among the Romans, had not of itself any such high idea, as has been affixed to it in later times. The meaning therefore of this wish seems to be, that though Trajan was contented to be in title no more than General [*Imperator*], yet in acts of public munificence he might be more than those who proudly styled themselves kings.

ments

ments of the ambassador which they send yearly to you with their homage, and the act which passes in the senate upon that occasion, amount to twelve thousand sesterces. But knowing the generous maxims of your government, I thought proper to send the decree without the ambassador, that at the same time they discharged their public duty to you, they might be eased in the manner of paying it. This city is likewise taxed with the sum of three thousand sesterces towards defraying the expense of an envoy, whom they annually send to compliment the governor of Mœsia: this expense I have also directed to be spared. I beg, Sir, you would do me the honour either to confirm my judgment, or correct my error in these points, by letting me know your sentiments.

Epist. LIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Well approve, my dear Pliny, of your having excused the Byzantines the expense of sending an ambassador to me. I shall esteem their duty as sufficiently paid though I only receive the act of their senate through your hands. The governor of Mœsia must likewise excuse them, if they compliment him at a less expense.

Epist. LIV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Beg, Sir, you would settle a doubt I have concerning your * diplomas; whether you think proper that those whose dates are expired shall

* A diploma is properly a grant of certain privileges either to particular places or persons. It signifies also grants of other kinds; and it sometimes means post-warrants, as, perhaps, it does in this place.

be in force, and how long? For I am apprehensive I may, through ignorance, either confirm such of these instruments as are illegal, or prevent the effect of those which are necessary.

Epist. LV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE diplomas whose dates are expired, must by no means be made use of. For which reason it is a principal rule with me, to send new instruments of this kind into all the provinces before they are immediately wanted.

Epist. LVI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

UPon intimating, Sir, my design to the city of Apamea, of examining into the state of their public funds and revenues, they told me they were all extremely willing I should inspect their accounts; but that no proconsul had ever yet perused them, as they had a privilege (and that of very ancient date) of administering their commonwealth in the manner they thought proper. I required them to draw up a memorial of what they then offered, which I transmit to you exactly as I received it; though I am sensible it contains several things foreign to the question. I beg you would honour me with your commands, how I am to act in this affair; for I should be extremely sorry either to exceed or fall short of my commission.

Epist. LVII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE memorial of the Apameans annexed to your letter, has saved me the necessity of considering the reasons they suggest, why the former proconsuls forbore to inspect their accounts; since they are willing to submit them to your examination.

examination. Their compliance deserves to be encouraged; and they may be assured, the inquiry you are to make in pursuance of my orders, shall be with a full reserve to their privileges.

Epist. LVIII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THE Nicomedians, Sir, before my arrival in this province, had begun to build a new forum contiguous to their former, in a corner of which stands an ancient temple dedicated to the *mother of the gods*. This fabric must either be repaired, or removed; and for this reason chiefly, because it is a much lower building than that which is now erected. Upon inquiry whether this temple had been consecrated, I was informed that their manner of dedication differs from ours. You will be pleased therefore, Sir, to consider whether a temple, which has not been consecrated in form, may be removed*, consistently with the ceremonies of religion: for if there is no objection from that quarter, there is none on the side of inconvenience.

Epist. LIX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU may without scruple, my dear Pliny, if the situation requires it, remove the temple of the *mother of the gods*, from the place where it now stands, to any other more convenient. You need be under no difficulty concerning the act of dedication; for the ground of a † foreign city is not capable of receiving that

* Whatever was legally consecrated, was ever afterwards unapplicable to profane uses.

† That is, a city not admitted to enjoy the laws and privileges of Rome.

kind

kind of consecration which is observed by our laws.

Epist. LX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WE have celebrated, Sir, with those sentiments of joy your virtues justly merit, the day of your accession, when, at the same time that you accepted, you saved the empire. And we sincerely implored the gods to preserve you in health and prosperity, as it is upon your welfare that the security and repose of mankind depends. I renewed at the same time the oath of allegiance at the head of the army, which repeated it after me in the usual form, the people of the province zealously expressing their affection to you by taking the same oath.

Epist. LXI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOUR letter, my dear Pliny, was extremely acceptable, as it gave me an account with what zeal and affection you, together with the army and the provincials, solemnized the day of my accession to the empire.

Epist. LXII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE money owing to the public, is, by the prudence, Sir, of your councils, and the care of my administration, either actually paid in, or now recovering: but I am afraid it must lie unemployed. For, as on one side, there are few or no opportunities of purchasing land, so on the other, one cannot meet with any person who is willing to borrow of the * public, (especially at

* The reason why they did not chuse to borrow of the public at the same rate of interest which they
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at the interest of 12 *per cent.*), when they can raise money upon the same terms from private hands. You will consider then, Sir, whether it may not be advisable, in order to invite responsible persons to take this money, to lower the interest; or if that scheme should not succeed, to place it in the hands of the *decurii*, upon their giving sufficient security to the public. And though they should not be willing to receive it, yet, as the rate of interest will be abated, the hardship will be so much the less.

Epist. LXIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Agree with you, my dear Pliny, that there seems to be no other method of facilitating the placing out of the public money, than by lowering the interest; the measure of which you will determine according to the number of the borrowers. But to compel persons to receive it, who are not disposed to do so, when possibly they themselves may have no opportunity of employing it, is by no means consistent with the justice of my government.

Epist. LXIV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Return you my highest acknowledgments, Sir, that, among the many important occupations in which you are engaged, you have condescended to be my guide in those points wherein I have consulted you: a favour which I must now again beseech you to grant me. A certain

paid to private persons, was (as one of the commentators observes), because in the former instance they were obliged to give security; whereas in the latter, they could raise money upon their personal credit.

person

person came before me with a complaint, that his adversaries, who had been banished for three years by the illustrious Servilius Calvus, still remained in the province: they, on the contrary, affirmed that Calvus had restored them again to their country, and produced his edict to that purpose. I thought it necessary therefore to refer the whole affair to you. For as I have your express orders not to restore any person who has been sentenced to banishment either by myself or others; so I have no directions with respect to those, who having been banished by some of my predecessors in this government, have by them also been restored. I am obliged, then, to beg you would inform me, Sir, what method I should observe, as well with regard to these, as to others, who, after having been condemned to perpetual banishment, have returned to the province without permission: for cases of that nature have likewise fallen under my cognisance. A person was brought before me who had been sentenced to perpetual exile by the proconsul Julius Bassus: but knowing that the acts of Bassus, during his administration, had been rescinded, and that the senate had granted leave to all those who had fallen under his condemnation, of bringing their appeal, provided they did so within the space of two years; I inquired of this man whether he had acquainted the proconsul with his case? He replied, he had not. I beg then you would inform me whether you would have him sent back again into exile; or whether you think some more severe, and what kind of punishment, should be inflicted upon him, and such others as may hereafter be found to lie under the same delinquency. I have annexed to my letter the decree of Calvus, and the edict by which the persons mentioned above were restored, as also the decree of Bassus.

Epist. LXV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Will let you know my determination concerning those exiles which were banished for three years by the proconsul P. Servilius Calvus, and soon afterwards restored to the province by his edict, when I shall have informed myself from him of the reasons of this proceeding. With respect to that person who was sentenced to perpetual banishment by Julius Bassus, yet continued to remain in the province, without making his appeal if he thought himself aggrieved, (though he had two years given him for that purpose), I would have him sent in chains to my * prætorian præfects: for only to remand him back to a punishment which he has contumaciously eluded, will by no means be sufficient.

Epist. LXVI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

When I cited the judges, Sir, to attend me at a † sessions which I was going to hold, Flavius Archippus claimed the privilege of being excused, as exercising the profession of a ‡ philo-

* These, in the original institution as settled by Augustus, were only commanders of his body-guards, but in the later times of the Roman empire they were next in authority under the Emperor, to whom they seem to have acted as a sort of prime ministers.

† The provinces were divided into a kind of circuits called *conventus*, whither the proconsuls used to go in order to administer justice. The judges here mentioned must not be understood to mean the same sort of judicial officers as with us; they were rather in the nature of our juries.

‡ By the imperial constitutions the philosophers were exempted from all public functions. *Catanaeus*.
sopher.

sopher. It was alleged by some who were present, that he ought not only to be excused from that office, but even struck out of the roll of judges, and remanded back to the punishment from which he had escaped by breaking his chains. At the same time a sentence of the proconsul Velius Paullus was read, by which it appeared that Archippus had been condemned to the mines for forgery. He had nothing to produce in proof that this sentence had ever been reversed. He alleged, however, in favour of his restitution, a petition which he presented to Domitian, together with a letter from that prince and a decree of the Prusensians in his honour. To these he subjoined a letter which he had received from you; as also an edict and a letter of your august father confirming the grants which had been made to him by Domitian. For these reasons, notwithstanding crimes of so atrocious a nature were laid to his charge, I did not think proper to determine any thing concerning him, without first consulting with you in the affair, which seems to merit your peculiar decision. I have transmitted to you, with this letter, the several allegations on both sides.

DOMITIAN'S Epist. to TERENCE MAXI-
MUS.

“**F**Lavius Archippus the philosopher has pre-
 “vailed with me to give an order that
 “600,000 sesterces be laid out in the purchase of
 “an estate for the support of him and his family,
 “in the neighbourhood of Prusias, his native
 “country. Let this be accordingly done: and
 “place that sum to the article of my benefac-
 “tions.”

From the same, to L. APPIUS MAXIMUS.

“ I Recommend, my dear Maximus, to your
 “ protection, that worthy philosopher Ar-
 “ chippus; a person whose morals are agreeable
 “ to his profession: and I would have you pay
 “ full regard to whatever he shall reasonably re-
 “ quest.”

The EDICT of the Emperor NERVA.

“ T Here are some points, no doubt, Quirites,
 “ concerning which the happy tenor of
 “ my government is a sufficient explanation of
 “ my sentiments; and a good prince need not
 “ give an express declaration in matters where-
 “ in his intention cannot but be clearly under-
 “ stood. Every citizen in the empire will bear
 “ me witness, that I gave up my private repose
 “ to the security of the public, in order to have
 “ the pleasure of dispensing new bounties of my
 “ own, and confirming former ones of my pre-
 “ decessors. But lest the memory of him * who
 “ made these grants, or the diffidence of those
 “ who received them, should occasion any in-
 “ terruption to the public joy, I thought it as
 “ necessary as it is agreeable to me to obviate
 “ these suspicions, by assuring them of my in-
 “ dulgence. Let it not be thought that I shall
 “ rescind either the public or private acts of any
 “ former prince, for the sake of meriting the ob-
 “ ligation of ratifying and confirming them; nor
 “ need any who have received the smiles of im-
 “ perial favour, renew their petitions to me in
 “ order to enjoy the benefit of them. Rather let
 “ them leave me in full leisure for conferring new

* Domitian.

“ favours;

“ favours ; under the assurance, that I am only
 “ to be solicited for those which have not already
 “ been obtained.”

From the same, to TULLIUS JUSTUS.

“ **A**S I have made it the maxim of my govern-
 “ ment to observe the ordinances of my
 “ predecessors in all things, so regard must be
 “ paid to the letters of Domitian.”

Epist. LXVII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

FLavius Archippus has conjured me by all my wishes for your prosperity, and by your immortal glory, that I would transmit to you the memorial which he presented to me. I could not refuse a request conceived in such terms ; however, I acquainted the prosecutrix with this my intention, from whom I have also received a memorial on her part. I have annexed them both to my letter ; that, by hearing as it were each side, you may more easily consider what to determine in this affair.

Epist. LXVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT is possible Domitian might be ignorant of the circumstances in which Archippus was, when he wrote the letter so much to that philosopher's honour. However, it is more agreeable to my disposition to suppose that prince designed he should be restored to his former situation ; especially since he so often had the honour of a statue decreed to him by those who could not be * ignorant of the sentence which the procon-

* In the text of all the editions it is *qui ignorabant* ; but the reasoning seems to require the negative particle ; though the commentators have passed over the passage without objection.

ful Paullus pronounced upon him. But I do not mean to intimate by this, my dear Pliny, that if any new charge should be brought against him, you should be less disposed to hear his accusers, I have examined the memorial of his prosecutrix, Furia Prima, as also that of Archippus himself which you sent with your former letter.

Epist. LXIX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

IT is with great judgment, Sir, you are apprehensive *, that the lake will be in danger of being entirely drained, if a communication is opened between that and the sea, by means of the river: but I think I have found a method to obviate that inconvenience. A channel may be cut from the lake to the river, and a narrow slip of land left between them. By this means the water in the lake will not only be preserved and kept distinct from the river, but all the same purposes will be answered as if they were united: for it will be extremely easy to convey over that little intervening ridge whatever burthens shall be brought down by the canal. This is a scheme which may be pursued, if it should be found necessary; but I hope there will be no occasion to put it in practice. For in the first place, the lake itself is pretty deep; and in the next, by damming up a river, which runs from it on the opposite side, and turning its course as we shall find proper, the same quantity of water may still be retained. Besides, there are several little brooks near the place where it is proposed the channel shall be cut, which, if skilfully collected, will supply the lake with water in proportion to what it shall lose. But if you should rather approve of the channel's being extended farther, and cut narrower, and so conveyed directly into

* See letters 50. and 51. of this book.

the sea, without running into the river, the reflux of the tide will return whatever it receives from the lake. After all, if the nature of the place should not admit of any of these schemes, the course of the water may be checked by sluices. These, however, and many other particulars, will be more skilfully examined into by the engineer, which, agreeably to your promise, I hope you will send; for indeed, Sir, it is an enterprise well worthy of your attention and magnificence. In the mean while I have wrote to the illustrious Calpurnius Macer, in pursuance of your orders, to send me a proper engineer for this occasion.

Epist. LXX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT is evident, my dear Pliny, that neither your prudence nor your care have been wanting in this affair of the lake, since, in order to make it of more general benefit to us, you have provided so many expedients against the hazard of its being drained. I leave it to your own choice to pursue which ever scheme shall be thought most proper. Calpurnius Macer will furnish you, no doubt, with an engineer, and artists of that kind are not wanting in his province.

Epist. LXXI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

AVery considerable question, Sir, in which the whole province is interested, has been lately started, concerning the * state and maintenance of deserted children. I have examined the constitutions of former princes upon this head, but not finding any thing in them relating, either in general or particular, to the Bithynians,

* That is, whether they should be considered in a state of freedom or slavery.

I thought it necessary to apply to you for your directions : for in a point which seems to require the special interposition of your authority, I could not content myself with following precedents. An edict of the emperor Augustus (as pretended) was read to me, concerning one Annia ; as also a letter from Vespasian to the Lacedæmonians, and another from Titus to the same, with one likewise from him to the Achæans. At the same time some letters from Domitian were exhibited to me, directed to the proconsuls Avidius Nigrinus, and Armenius Brocchus, together with one from that prince to the Lacedæmonians : but I have not transmitted them to you, as well because they were not correct (and some of them too of suspicious authority), as because I imagine the true copies are preserved in your archives.

Epist. LXXII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE question concerning such children as were exposed by their parents, and afterwards taken up by others, and educated in a state of servitude though born free, has been frequently discussed ; but I do not find in the constitutions of the princes my predecessors, any general regulation upon this head, extending to all the provinces. There are, indeed, some rescripts of Domitian to Avidius Nigrinus and Armenius Brocchus, which ought to be observed ; but Bithynia is not comprehended in the provinces therein mentioned. I am of opinion therefore, that the claims of those who assert their right of freedom upon this footing, should be allowed without obliging them to purchase their liberty by paying for their maintenance.

Epist.

Epist. LXXIII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

HAVING been petitioned by some persons to grant them the liberty (agreeably to the practice of former proconsuls) of removing the relics of their deceased relations, upon the suggestion, that either their monuments were decayed by age, or ruined by the inundations of the river, or for other reasons of the same kind; I thought proper, Sir, knowing that, in cases of this nature, it is usual at Rome to apply to the college of priests, to consult with you who are the sovereign of that sacred order, what you would have me observe in this affair.

Epist. LXXIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT will be a hardship upon the provincials, to oblige them to address themselves to the college of priests, whenever they may have just reasons for removing the ashes of their ancestors. In this case, therefore, it will be better you should follow the example of the governors your predecessors, and grant or deny them this liberty as you shall see reasonable.

Epist. LXXV. PLINY to the Emperor TRA-
JAN.

I Have inquired, Sir, at Prusa, for a proper place on which to erect the bath you were pleased to allow that city to build; and I have found one to my satisfaction. It is upon the site where formerly, I am told, stood a very beautiful fabric, but which is now entirely fallen into ruins. By fixing upon that spot, we shall gain the advantage of ornamenting the city in a part
which

which at present is exceedingly deformed, and enlarging it at the same time without removing any of the edifices; only rebuilding one which is fallen to decay. There are some circumstances attending this structure, of which it is proper I should inform you. Claudius Polyænus bequeathed it to the emperor Claudius Cæsar, with directions that a temple should be erected to that prince in the midst of a piazza, and that the remainder of the house should be let in apartments. The city received the rents for a considerable time; but partly by its having been plundered, and partly by its being neglected, the piazza, together with the whole dome, is entirely gone out of repair, and there is now scarce any thing remaining of it, but the ground upon which it stood. If you shall think proper, Sir, either to give or sell this spot of ground to the city, as it lies so conveniently for their purpose, they will receive it as the highest mark of your favour. I intend, with your permission, to place the bath in the vacant area; and to extend a range of porticoes with seats, in that part where the former edifice stood. This new fabric I design to dedicate to you, by whose bounty it will rise with all the elegance and magnificence worthy of your glorious name. I have sent you a copy of the will, by which, though it is not very correct, you will see, that Polyænus left several things for the ornament of this house; but those also are lost with all the rest: I will however make the strictest inquiry after them that I am able.

Epist. LXXVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Have no objection to the Prusenses making use of the area together with the vacant house, which you say is fallen into ruins, for the situation of their bath. But it is not sufficiently clear

clear by your letter, whether the temple in the centre of the piazza was actually dedicated to Claudius, or not; for if it were, it is still consecrated ground *.

Epist. LXXVII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Have been pressed by some, to take upon myself the cognisance of causes relating to claims of freedom by birthright, according to a rescript of Domitian's to Minucius Rufus, and the practice of former proconsuls. But upon casting my eye on the decree of the senate concerning cases of this nature, I find it only mentions † the proconsular provinces. I therefore, Sir, defer intermeddling in this affair, till I shall receive your commands how you would have me act.

* And consequently, by the Roman laws, unapplicable to any other purpose.

† The Roman provinces, in the times of the emperors, were of two sorts; those which were distinguished by the name of the *Provinciae Caesaris*, and the *Provinciae Senatus*. The *Provinciae Caesaris*, or imperial provinces, were such as the emperor, for reasons of policy, reserved to his own immediate administration, or of those whom he thought proper to appoint: the *Provinciae Senatus*, or proconsular provinces, were such as he left to the government of proconsuls or praetors chosen in the ordinary method of election. [*Vid. Suet. in Aug. c. 44. n. 1.*] Of the former kind was Bithynia, at the time when our author presided there. *Vid. Masson. vit. Plin. p. 133.*

Epist. LXXVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IF you will send me the decree of the senate, which occasioned your doubt, I shall be able to judge, whether you ought to take upon yourself the cognisance of causes relating to claims of freedom by birthright.

Epist. LXXIX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

Julius Largus, of the province of Pontica, (whom I never saw, nor indeed even heard of till lately), in confidence, Sir, of your distinguishing judgment in my favour, has intrusted me with the execution of the last instance of his loyalty towards you. He has left me, by will, his estate upon trust, in the first place to receive out of it 50,000 sesterces for my own use, and to apply the remainder for the benefit of the cities of Heraclea and Tiani, either for the erecting some public edifice in honour of your memory, or instituting athletic games, as I shall see proper. These games are to be celebrated every five years, and called *Trajan's games*. Of this I thought it necessary to acquaint you; and for this reason chiefly, that I may have your sentiments how I ought to determine.

Epist. LXXX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

BY the prudent choice Julius Largus has made of a trustee, one would imagine he had known you well. You will consider then what will most tend to the perpetuating of his memory, according to the circumstances of the
 respective

respective places; and pursue whatever you shall think most proper.

Epist. LXXXI. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

YOU acted agreeably, Sir, to your usual prudence, when you commanded the illustrious Calpurnius Macer to send a legionary centurion to Byzantium. You will consider whether the city of Juliopolis does not deserve the same regard, which, though it is extremely small, sustains very great burthens, and is so much the more exposed to injuries, as it is less capable of resisting them. Whatever benefits you shall confer upon that city, will in effect be advantageous to the whole country: for it is situated at the entrance of Bithynia, and is the town through which all who travel into that province generally pass.

Epist. LXXXII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE circumstances of the city of Byzantium are such, by the great confluence of strangers to it, that I thought myself obliged to honour it with a legionary centurion's guard, which was always granted to them in former reigns. But if we should distinguish the city of Juliopolis in the same manner, it will be introducing a precedent for many others, whose claim to that favour will rise in proportion to their want of strength. I have so much confidence, however, in your administration, as to believe you will omit no method of protecting them from injuries. If any shall act contrary to the discipline I have enjoined, let them be instantly corrected; or should their crimes be too enormous for immediate chastisement, if they happen to be sol-

diers, I would have them sent to their officers, with an account of the particular misdemeanor you shall find they have been guilty of; but if they are persons who are returning to Rome, inform me by letter.

Epist. LXXXIII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

BY a law of * Pompey's concerning the Bithynians it is enacted, Sir, that no person shall exercise any magistracy, or be chosen into the senate under the age of thirty. By the same law it is declared, that those who have passed through the offices of the commonwealth, shall be senators of course. Subsequent to this law the Emperor Augustus published an edict, by which it was ordained, that persons of the age of twenty-two should be capable of being magistrates. The question therefore is, whether those who have exercised the functions of a magistrate before the age of thirty, may be legally chosen into the senate by the † censors? And if so, whether, by the same kind of construction, they may be elected senators, at the age when they are allowed to be magistrates, though

* Pompey the Great having subdued Mithridates, and by that means greatly enlarged the Roman empire, passed several laws relating to the newly-conquered provinces, and, among others, that which is here mentioned; as Catanæus observes from Apian.

† The right of electing senators did not originally belong to the censors, who were only, as Tully somewhere calls them, *guardians of the discipline and manners of the city*; but in process of time they ingrossed the whole privilege of conferring that honour.

they

they have not actually borne any office? A custom, it seems, which has hitherto been observed; and is said to be necessary, as it is rather better that persons of noble birth should be admitted into the senate, than those of plebeian rank. The censors elect having desired my sentiments upon this point, I was of opinion, that, both by the law of Pompey and the edict of Augustus, those who had exercised the magistrature before the age of thirty, might be chosen into the senate; and for this reason, because the edict allows the office of magistrate to be undertaken before thirty; and the law declares, that whoever has been a magistrate, has a right to be a senator. But with respect to those who never discharged any office in the state, though they were of the age required for that purpose, I had some doubt: and therefore, Sir, I apply to you for your directions. I have annexed to this letter the heads of the law, together with the edict of Augustus.

Epist. LXXXIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Agree with you, my dear Pliny, in your construction; and am of opinion that the law of Pompey is so far repealed by the edict of the Emperor Augustus, that those persons who are not less than twenty-two years of age may execute the office of magistrates, and when they have, may be received into the senate of their respective cities. But I think those who are under thirty years of age, and have not discharged the function of a magistrate, cannot, upon pretence that in point of years they might have done so, claim a place in the senate of their several communities.

*Epist. LXXXV. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.*

WHilst I was dispatching some public affairs, Sir, at Prusa, with an intention of leaving that city the same day, the magistrate Asclepiades informed me, that Eumolpus had appeared to me from a motion which Cocceianus Dion made in their senate. Dion, it seems, having been appointed supervisor of a public edifice, desired that it might be assigned * to the city in form. Eumolpus, who was counsel for Flavius Archippus, insisted that Dion should first be required to deliver in his accounts relating to this work, before it was assigned to the corporation; suggesting he had not performed his duty in the manner he ought. He took notice at the same time, that this building, in which your statue is erected, was made use of also for the burial † of the dead, the bodies of Dion's wife and son being (as he asserted) there deposited; and petitioned that I would hear this cause in the public tribunal. Upon my complying with his request, and deferring my jour-

* This, probably, was some act whereby the city was to ratify and confirm the proceedings of Dion under the commission assigned to him.

† It was a notion which generally prevailed with the ancients, in the Jewish as well as Heathen world, that there was a pollution in the contact of dead bodies, and this they extended to the very house in which the corpse lay, and even to the uncovered vessels that stood in the same room. [*Vid. Pot. antiq. v. 2. 188.*]. From some such opinion as this it is probable, that the circumstance here mentioned of placing Trajan's statue where these bodies were deposited, was esteemed as a mark of disrespect to his person.

ney for that purpose, he desired a longer day in order to prepare the cause, and that I would try it in some other city. I appointed the city of Nicea, where, when I took my seat, Eumolpus, pretending not to be yet sufficiently instructed, moved that the trial might be again put off: Dion, on the contrary, insisted it should be heard. They debated this point very fully on both sides, and entered a little into the merits of the cause; when being of opinion, that it was reasonable it should be adjourned, and thinking it proper to advise with you in an affair which was of consequence in point of example, I directed them to give in the articles of their respective allegations in writing; for I was desirous you should judge from their own words of what was offered on each part. This Dion promised to do, as Eumolpus also assured me he would draw up in writing what he had to allege on the part of the community. But he added, that being only concerned as advocate on behalf of Archippus, whose instructions he had laid before me, he had nothing to charge with respect to the sepulchres. Archippus however, for whom Eumolpus was counsel here, as at Prusa, undertook to present an accusation upon this head in writing. But neither Eumolpus nor Archippus (though I have waited several days for that purpose) have yet performed their engagement: Dion indeed has; and I have annexed his memorial to this letter. I have taken a view myself of the buildings, where I find your statue is placed in a library; and as to the edifice which is supposed to contain the bodies of Dion's wife and son, it stands in the middle of an area, which is surrounded with a colonade. I particularly therefore intreat you, Sir, to direct my judgment in the determination of this cause above all others, as it is a point to which the world is greatly attentive.

And,

And, indeed, it highly deserves a very mature deliberation, since the fact is not only acknowledged, but countenanced by many examples.

Epist. LXXXVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

AS you well know, my dear Pliny, it is the fixed maxim of my government not to create an awe of my person by severe and rigorous measures, and by construing every slight offence into an act of treason, there was no occasion for you to hesitate a moment upon the point, concerning which you thought proper to consult me. Without entering therefore into that question, (to which I would by no means give any attention, though there were ever so many instances of the same kind), I recommend to your care the examination of Dion's accounts relating to the public works which he has finished; as it is a case in which the interest of the city is concerned, and as Dion neither ought, nor indeed does refuse, to submit to the inquiry.

Epist. LXXXVII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THE Niceans having conjured me, Sir, by (what is, and ought to be, most sacred to me) your prosperity and immortal glory, to present to you their petition; I did not think myself at liberty to refuse them: I have therefore inclosed it in this letter.

Epist. LXXXVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE Niceans, I find, claim a right, by an edict of Augustus, to the estate of every citizen who dies intestate. You will therefore summon the several parties interested in this question,

question, and with the assistance of Epimachus and Gemellinus, my procurators, (having duly weighed every argument that shall be alleged against the claim), determine as shall appear most reasonable.

Epist. LXXXIX. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

MAY this and many succeeding birthdays be attended, Sir, with the highest felicity to you; and may you, in the midst of an uninterrupted course of health and prosperity, be still adding to the increase of that immortal glory, which your virtues justly merit!

Epist. XC. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOUR wishes, my dear Pliny, for my enjoyment of many happy birthdays amidst the glory and prosperity of the republic, were extremely agreeable to me.

Epist. XCI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE city of Sinope is ill supplied, Sir, with water, which however may be brought thither from about sixteen miles distance in great plenty and perfection. The ground, indeed, near the source of this spring, is, for something more than a mile, of a very soft and marshy nature; but I have directed an examination to be made, (which will be done at a small expense), whether it is capable of bearing any superstructure. I have taken care to provide a sufficient fund for this purpose, if you shall approve, Sir, of a work so conducive to the health and pleasure of this colony, greatly distressed by a scarcity of water.

Epist.

Epist. XCII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Would have you proceed, my dear Pliny, in carefully examining, whether the ground you suspect, is firm enough to support an aquæduct. For I have no manner of doubt that it is proper the city of Sinope should be supplied with water; provided their finances will bear the expense of a work so conducive to their health and pleasure.

Epist. XCIII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE free and confederate city of Amisus enjoys, by your indulgence, the privilege of its own laws. A memorial being presented to me there, concerning a charitable * society, I have inclosed it in this letter, that you may consider, Sir, whether, and how far, these meetings are to be permitted, or prohibited.

Epist. XCIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IF a charitable society be agreeable to the laws of the Amisenians, which by the articles of alliance it is stipulated they shall enjoy, I shall not oppose it; especially if these contributions

* The learned Casaubon, in his observations upon Theophrastus, (as cited by one of the commentators), informs us, that there were, at Athens and other cities of Greece, certain fraternities, which paid into a common chest a monthly contribution towards the support of such of their members as had fallen into misfortunes; upon condition, that if ever they arrived to more prosperous circumstances, they should repay into the general fund the money so advanced.

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are employed, not for the purposes of riot and faction, but for the support of the indigent. In other cities, however, which are subject to our laws, I would have all assemblies of this nature prohibited.

Epist. XCV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

Suetonius Tranquillus, Sir, is a person of great merit and learning, as well as of noble birth. I was so much pleased with his turn and manners, that I long since received him into my family; and my affection for him still increased the more I discovered of his character. Two reasons concur to make the privilege * which the law grants to those who have three children, extremely necessary to him; the bounty of his friends, and ill success of his marriage. Those advantages therefore which nature has denied to

* By the law for encouragement of matrimony, as a penalty upon those who lived bachelors, they were declared incapable of inheriting any legacy by will; so likewise if being married, they had no children, they could not claim the full advantage of benefactions of that kind. Thus Nævolus in Juvenal very humorously urges his gallantries in his friend's family, as a meritorious piece of service which he had done him.

*And ow'st thou nothing then, ingrate! to me,
That from my loins you sons and daughters see?
A parent's privilege by me you gain,
And the rich legacy in full obtain. Sat. 9. ver. 82.*

Pliny therefore alludes to this law, when he mentions the bounties of Tranquillus's deceased friends, as one reason why it was expedient for him to obtain the *jus trium liberorum*, viz. in order to entitle him to the full benefit of their several bequests.

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him, he hopes to obtain from your goodness, by means of my intercession. I am thoroughly sensible, Sir, of the value of the favour I am asking; but I know I am making this request to one, whose gracious compliance with all my desires I have amply experienced. How passionately I wish to obtain this favour, you will judge by my thus requesting it in my absence, which I should not have done, had it been a point wherein I am only commonly solicitous.

Epist. XCVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU cannot but know, my dear Pliny, how reserved I am in granting favours of this kind, having frequently declared in the senate, that I had not exceeded the number which I assured that illustrious order I would be contented with. I have yielded, however, to your request; and have directed an article to be inserted in my register, that I have conferred upon Tranquillus, on my usual conditions, the privilege which the law grants to those who have three children.

*Epist. * XCVII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.*

IT is a rule, Sir, which I inviolably observe, to refer myself to you in all my doubts; for who is more capable of removing my scruples, or

* This letter is esteemed as almost the only genuine monument of ecclesiastical antiquity relating to the times immediately succeeding the apostles, it being wrote at most not above forty years after the death of Paul. It was preserved by the Christians themselves as a clear and unsuspecting evidence of the purity of their doctrines; and is frequently appealed to by the early writers of the church against the calumnies of their adversaries.

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informing my ignorance? Having never been present at any trials concerning those who profess Christianity, I am unacquainted not only with the nature of their crimes, or the measure of their punishment, but how far it is proper to enter into an examination concerning them. Whether therefore any difference is usually made with respect to the ages of the guilty, or no distinction is to be observed between the young and the adult; whether repentance entitles them to a pardon; or if a man has been once a Christian, it avails nothing to desist from his error; whether the very profession of Christianity, unattended with any criminal act, or only the crimes themselves inherent in the profession are punishable; in all these points I am greatly doubtful. In the mean while, the method I have observed towards those who have been brought before me as Christians, is this: I interrogated them whether they were Christians; if they confessed, I repeated the question twice again, adding threats at the same time; when, if they still persevered, I ordered them to be immediately punished: for I was persuaded, whatever the nature of their opinions might be, a contumacious and inflexible obstinacy certainly deserved correction. There were others also brought before me possessed with the same infatuation, but being * citizens of Rome, I directed them to be carried thither. But this crime spreading (as is usually the case) while it was actually under prosecution, several instances of the same nature occurred. An information

* It was one of the privileges of a Roman citizen, secured by the Sempronian law, that he could not be capitally convicted but by the suffrage of the people, which seems to have been still so far in force, as to make it necessary to send the persons here mentioned to Rome.

was presented to me without any name subscribed, containing a charge against several persons, who, upon examination, denied they were Christians, or had ever been so. They repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered religious rites with wine and frankincense before your statue, (which for the purpose I had ordered to be brought together with those of the gods), and even reviled the name of Christ; whereas there is no forcing, it is said, those who are really Christians, into a compliance with any of these articles: I thought proper therefore to discharge them. Some among those who were accused by a witness in person, at first confessed themselves Christians, but immediately after denied it; while the rest owned indeed that they had been of that number formerly, but had now (some above three, others more, and a few above twenty years ago) forsaken that error. They all worshipped your statue and the images of the gods, throwing out imprecations at the same time against the name of Christ. They affirmed, the whole of their guilt, or their error, was, that they met on a certain stated day before it was light, and addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some God, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purposes of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which, it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble, to eat in common a harmless meal. From this custom, however, they desisted after the publication of my edict, by which, according to your orders, I forbade the meeting of any assemblies. After receiving this account, I judged it so much the more necessary to endeavour to extort the real truth, by putting two female slaves

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to the torture, who were said to administer * in their religious functions: but I could discover nothing more than an absurd and excessive superstition. I thought proper therefore to adjourn all farther proceedings in this affair, in order to consult with you. For it appears to be a matter highly deserving your consideration; more especially as great numbers must be involved in the danger of these prosecutions, this inquiry having already extended, and being still likely to extend to persons of all ranks and ages, and even of both sexes. For this contagious superstition is not confined to the cities only, but has spread its infection among the country-villages. Nevertheless, it still seems impossible to remedy this evil and restrain its progress. The temples, at least, which were once almost deserted, begin now to be frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are again revived; while there is a general demand for the victims, which for some time past have met with but few purchasers. From hence it is easy to imagine, what numbers might be reclaimed from this error, if a pardon were granted to those who shall repent.

Epist. XCVIII. TRAJAN TO PLINY.

THE method you have pursued, my dear Pliny, in the proceedings against those Christians which were brought before you, is extremely proper; as it is not possible to lay down

* These women, it is supposed, exercised the same office as Phœbe mentioned by Paul, whom he styles deaconness of the church of Cenchrea. Their business was to tend the poor and sick, and other charitable offices; as also to assist at the ceremony of female baptism, for the more decent performance of that rite: as Vossius observes upon this passage.

any fixed plan by which to act in all cases of this nature. But I would not have you officiously enter into any inquiries concerning them. If indeed they should be brought before you, and the crime is proved, they must be punished * ; with the

* If we impartially examine this prosecution of the Christians, we shall find it to have been grounded on the ancient constitution of the state, and not to have proceeded from a cruel or arbitrary temper in Trajan. The Roman legislature appears to have been early jealous of any innovation in point of public worship; and we find the magistrates, during the old republic, frequently interposing in cases of that nature. Valerius Maximus has collected some instances to that purpose, [L. 1. c. 3.]; and Livy mentions it as an established principle of the earlier ages of the commonwealth, to guard against the introduction of foreign ceremonies of religion. *Quoties* (says that excellent historian, speaking in the person of one of the consuls who is addressing himself to the people) *quoties hoc patrum avorumque atate negotium est magistratibus datum, ut sacra externa fieri vetarent? Judicabant enim prudentissimi viri—nihil eque dissolvendæ religionis esse, quam ubi non patrio, sed externo ritu sacrificaretur.* [L. 39. c. 16.]. It was an old and fixed maxim likewise of the Roman government, not to suffer any unlicensed assemblies of the people; and of this Livy also is a voucher: *Majores vestri* (says he) *ne vos quidem nisi quum, &c. forte temere coire noluerunt; et ubicunque multitudo esset, illi et legitimum rectorem multitudinis censebant debere esse.* [L. 36. c. 25.]. From hence it seems evident, that the Christians had rendered themselves obnoxious (not so much to Trajan, as) to the ancient and settled laws of the state, by introducing a foreign worship, and assembling themselves without authority.

We are not therefore to judge of the proceedings in question, by the rules we should apply to cases of the same nature in our own times. The established religion of the Romans was no other, in the judgment and

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the restriction however, that where the party denies himself to be a Christian, and shall make it

and confession of their best writers, than an engine of state, which could not be shaken without the utmost danger, or rather, perhaps, without the total subversion of their civil government. Accordingly we find them strongly inculcating a tenacious observance of all its rites: *Majorum instituta tueri* (says Cicero) *sacris cæremoniisque retinendis, sapientis est.* [De Leg.]. Nor is this principle, if the observation of the celebrated Machiavel is just, peculiar to the Roman state, but of universal truth in politics; for he lays it down as a general maxim, That “wherever the religion of any state falls into disregard and contempt, it is impossible for that state to subsist long.” [*Mach. discorsi sopra Tit. Liv.*]. This case therefore is to be considered in a civil, not a religious view; as a matter of state, not of speculation; wherein the lenity and moderation both of the Emperor and his minister deserve to be applauded, as they are neither of them for pushing the matter as far as they most certainly might, had they acted strictly up to the ancient and fundamental laws of their country.

The circumstance that attended the Christian assemblies being held at an unusual hour (*ante lucem*, as Pliny says), seems to have raised a surmise that they were of the Bacchanalian kind. For it is extremely observable, that in the account which the Christians here give of the true design of their meeting, they justify themselves from the very crimes with which the Bacchanalians had been charged; intimating, it should seem, that they themselves had been taxed with the same: *se sacramento non ad scelus aliquod obstringere; sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, &c.* which runs exactly parallel with the accusation against the Bacchanalians, as it stands in Livy: *Nec unum genus noxæ, stupra promiscua, &c. sed falsi testes, falsa signa testimoniarque et indicia ex eadem officina exhibant.* [Liv. l. 39. c. 8.]

evident that he is not, by invoking our gods, let him (notwithstanding any former suspicion) be pardoned upon his repentance. Informations without the accuser's name subscribed, ought not to be received in prosecutions of any sort, as it is introducing a very dangerous precedent, and by no means agreeable to the equity of my government.

Epist. XCIX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE elegant and beautiful city of Amastris, Sir, has, among other capital buildings, a most noble and extensive piazza. On one entire side of this structure runs, what is called indeed a river, but in fact is no other than a vile common shore, extremely offensive to the eye, and at the same time very unwholesome by its noxious smell. It will be advantageous therefore, in point of health, as well as ornament, to have it covered; which shall be done, with your permission: as I will take care on my part, that money be not wanting for executing so noble and necessary a work.

Epist. C. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT is highly reasonable, my dear Pliny, if the water which runs through the city of Amastris is prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants, that it should be covered. I am well assured, you will, with your usual application, take care that the money necessary for this work shall not be wanting.

Epist. CI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WE have paid, Sir, with great joy and alacrity, the vows which we offered up for you

you the last year; and have again publicly renewed them, assisted by the army and provincials. We implored the gods to preserve you and the republic in safety and prosperity, with that peculiar mark of their bounty, which not only your other many and great virtues, but particularly your distinguished piety and reverence of them deserves.

Epist. CII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT was very agreeable to me to learn by your letter, that the army and the provincials seconded you with great joy and unanimity, in those vows which you paid and renewed to the immortal gods, for my welfare.

Epist. CIII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

WE have celebrated, with all the zeal we ought, the day in which, by a very happy succession, the protection of mankind was transferred to you; recommending to the gods, from whom you received the empire, the object of our public vows and congratulations.

Epist. CIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Was extremely well pleased to be informed by your letter, that you had, at the head of the soldiers and the provincials, solemnized my accession to the empire, with all due joy and zeal.

Epist.

Epist. CV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

Valerius Paulinus, Sir, having left me his right * of patronage over all his freedmen, except one, I entreat you to grant the freedom of Rome to three of them. To desire you to extend this favour to more, would, I fear, be too unreasonable a trespass upon your indulgence; which, as I have amply experienced, I ought to be so much the more cautious in troubling. The persons for whom I make this request are, C. Valerius Aëtiaëus, C. Valerius Dionysius, and C. Valerius Aper.

Epist. CVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

AS it is very generous of you to consult the interest of those whom Valerius Paulinus has confided to your trust, I cannot but encourage your good intentions. I have therefore given the freedom of the city to those persons for whom you requested it, and have directed the grant to be registered. I am ready to do the same for the rest, whenever you shall desire me.

* By the Papian law, which passed in the consulship of M. Papius Mutilus and Q. Poppeas Secundus, U. C. 761, if a freedman died worth 100,000 sesterces, (or about 800 l. of our money), leaving only one child, his patron (that is, the master from whom he received his liberty) was entitled to half his estate; if he left two children, to one third; but if more than two, then the patron was absolutely excluded. This was afterwards altered by Justinian. *Inst.* l. 3. *tit.* 8.

Epist.

Epist. CVII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

P. Accius Aquila, captain of the sixth equestrian cohort, requested me, Sir, to transmit his petition to you, in favour of his daughter. I thought it would be unkind to refuse him this good office, knowing, as I do, with what patience and humanity you receive the petitions of the soldiers.

Epist. CVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Have read the petition of P. Accius Aquila, captain of the sixth equestrian cohort, which you sent to me; and, in compliance with his request, I have given his daughter the freedom of the city of Rome. I send you at the same time the patent, which you will deliver to him.

Epist. CIX. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Beg, Sir, your directions with respect to the recovering those debts which are due to the cities of Bithynia and Pontus, either for rent, or goods sold, or upon any other consideration. I find they have a privilege granted to them by several proconsuls, of being preferred to other creditors; and this custom has prevailed, as if it had been established by law. Your prudence, I imagine, will think it necessary to enact some settled rule, by which their rights may always be secured. For the ordinances of others, however wisely founded, are but feeble and temporary expedients, unless confirmed by your authority.

Epist. CX. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THE rule by which the cities either of Pontus or Bithynia are to be governed, in the recovery of debts of whatever kind, due to their several communities, must be determined agreeably to their respective laws. Where any of them enjoy the privilege of being preferred to other creditors, it must be observed; but where no such privilege prevails, it is not just I should establish one, in prejudice of private property.

Epist. CXI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE solicitor to the treasury of the city of Amisus laid a claim, Sir, before me against Julius Piso of about 40,000 denarii, which were given him by the public above twenty years ago, with the consent of the general council and assembly of the city: and he founded his demand upon certain of your edicts, by which donations of this kind are prohibited. Piso, on the other hand, asserted that he had conferred large sums of money upon the community, and indeed had expended that way almost his whole estate. He insisted upon the length of time which had intervened since this donation, and hoped that he should not be compelled, to the ruin of the remainder * of his fortunes, to refund a sum, which had

* The translator has ventured to give this sense to *reliquæ dignitatis*. It is, he confesses, a very uncommon, perhaps the single instance of the word *dignitas* being used in that meaning; still, however the context, together with the epithet which is joined with it, will, he imagines, clearly justify him. There is nothing in the nature of this case to make it reasonable to suppose,

had been granted him long since, in return for many good offices he had done to the city. For this reason, Sir, I thought it necessary to suspend giving any judgment in this cause, till I shall receive your directions.

Epist. CXII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

THough by my edicts I have ordained, that no largesses shall be given out of the public money; yet, that numberless private persons may not be disturbed in the secure possession of their fortunes, those donations which have been made long since, ought not to be called in question or revoked. We will not therefore inquire into any thing that has been transacted in this affair so long ago as twenty years; for I would be no less attentive to secure the repose of every private man, than the treasure of every public community.

pose, that the dignity of Julius Piso should be impeached; as little is it to be collected from any thing contained in this letter, or Trajan's answer. The adjective *reliqua* being added to *dignitas*, removes every suspicion of its signifying *honour* (as the ingenious French translator Mons. de Sacy, and his humble copier the Italian Tedeschi, have rendered it), for honour scarce admits of fractions, and there can be no remainder after a subtraction of that kind. The truth, it should seem, is, that as the value of a man's estate was, among the Romans, a necessary qualification to render him capable of the dignities of the commonwealth, our author, by a figure of speech, puts *dignitas* for *facultas*; the consequent (to speak in the language of the grammarians) for the antecedent.

Epist.

Epist. CXIII. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE Pompeian law, Sir, which is observed in Pontus and Bithynia, does not direct that any money should be given by those who are elected into the public council by the censors. It has however been usual for such members as have been admitted into those assemblies, in pursuance of the privilege which you were pleased to grant to some particular cities, of receiving above their legal number, to pay one or two thousand denarii. Subsequent to this, the Proconsul Anicius Maximus ordained (though indeed his edict extended to some few cities only), that those who were elected by the censors should also pay into the treasury a certain sum, which varied in different places. It remains therefore for your consideration, whether it would not be proper to settle a certain fixed sum for each member, who is elected into the council, to pay upon his entrance; for it well becomes you, whose every word and action deserves immortality, to give laws that shall for ever be permanent.

Epist. CXIV. TRAJAN to PLINY.

I Can give no general directions applicable to all the cities of Bithynia, whether those who are made members of their respective councils shall pay an honorary fee upon their admittance, or not. It seems best therefore, in this case, (what indeed upon all occasions is the safest way), to leave each city to its respective laws. But I think, however, that the censors ought to set the sum lower to those who are chosen into the senate

nate contrary to their inclinations, than to the rest.

Epist. CXV. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

THE Pompeian law, Sir, allows the Bithynians to give the freedom of their respective cities to whatever persons they think proper, provided they are not foreigners, but belong to some of the cities of this province. The same law specifies the particular causes for which the censors may expel any member the senate; amongst which number, that of being a foreigner is not mentioned. Certain of the censors therefore have desired my sentiments, whether they ought to expel a member if he should happen to be a foreigner. But I thought it necessary to receive your instructions in this case; not only because the law, though it forbids foreigners to be admitted citizens, does not direct a senator to be expelled for the same reason, but because I am informed, that there is in every city several members of their council who are in these circumstances. If therefore this clause of the law, which seems to be antiquated by a long custom to the contrary, should be enforced, many cities, as well as private persons, will be thrown into great confusion. I have subjoined the heads of this law to my letter.

Epist. CXVI. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU might very reasonably, my dear Pliny, be doubtful what decision to give to the inquiry of the censors; whether they might elect into the senate, foreign citizens, though of the same province? The authority of law on one side, and long custom prevailing against it on the

other, might well throw you into a state of suspense. The proper mean to observe in this case, will be, to make no change in what is past, but to suffer those senators who are already elected, though contrary to law, to keep their seats, to whatever city they may belong; in all future elections, however, to pursue the directions of the Pompeian law: for to extend its influence backwards, must necessarily introduce great confusion.

Epist. CXVII. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

IT is customary here upon any person's taking the manly robe, solemnizing his marriage, entering upon the office of a magistrate, or dedicating any public work, to invite the whole senate, together with a considerable part of the commonalty, and distribute to each of the company one or two denarii. I beg you would inform me, whether you think proper this ceremony should be observed, or how far you approve of it. For myself, though I am of opinion that upon some occasions, especially those of public festivals, this kind of invitations may be permitted; yet when they are carried so far as to draw together a thousand persons, and sometimes more, it is going, I fear, beyond a reasonable number, and has something the appearance of ambitious largesses.

Epist. CXVIII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

IT is with justice you apprehend, that these public invitations, which extend to an unreasonable number of people, and where the dole is distributed, not singly to a few acquaintance, but as it were to whole collective bodies, may be
turned

turned to the turbulent purposes of ambition. But I have made choice of your prudence, in the persuasion that you would take proper measures for regulating the manners and settling the peace of this province.

Epist. CXIX. PLINY to the Emperor
TRAJAN.

THE athletic victors, Sir, in the * *Iselastic* games, think they ought to receive the prize you have established for the conquerors at those combats on the day they are crowned: for it is not at all material, they say, what time they were triumphantly conducted into their country, but when they merited that honour by their conquest. On the contray, when I consider the meaning of the term *Iselastic*, I am strongly inclined to believe, that the time of their public entry is to be alone considered. They likewise petition to be allowed the prize you give at those combats which you have made *Iselastic*, though they were conquerors before that establishment took place: for it is but reasonable, they assert, that they should receive their rewards in this case, as they are deprived of them at those games which have been divested of the honour of being *Iselastic*, since their victories. But I am extremely doubtful, whether a retrospect should be

* These games are called *Iselastic*, from the Greek word *ισελαστικω*, *invebor*, because the victors, drawn by white horses, and wearing crowns on their heads, were conducted with great pomp into their respective cities, which they entered through a breach in the walls made for that purpose; intimating, as Plutarch observes, that a city which produced such able and victorious citizens, had little occasion for the defence of walls. [*Cataneus*.] They received also annually a certain honourable stipend from the public.

admitted in this case, and a reward given to which they had no right at the time they gained the victory. I beg therefore you would be pleased to direct my judgment in these points, by explaining the intention of your own benefactions.

Epist. CXX. TRAJAN to PEINY.

THE reward proposed to the conqueror in the Iselastick games, is not, I think, due till he makes his public entry into his city. Nor at those combats which I have thought proper to make Iselastick, ought the prizes to be extended backwards to those who conquered there before that alteration took place. As to the plea which these athletic combatants urge, that they ought to receive the Iselastick prize at those combats which have been made Iselastick after their conquests, as they are denied it in the same case where the games have ceased to be so; it proves nothing in their favour: since, notwithstanding any change which has been made relating to these games, they are not called upon to return the recompense which they received prior to such alteration.

Epist. CXXI. PLINY to the Emperor TRAJAN.

I Have never, Sir, accommodated any person with an order for post-chaises, or made use of them upon any occasion but in your affairs. I find myself however at present under a sort of necessity of breaking through this fixed rule. My wife having received an account of her * grandfather's death, and being desirous to wait upon her † aunt with all possible expedition, I

* Fabatus.

† Hispulla.

thought

thought it would be unkind to deny her the use of this privilege; as the grace of so tender an office consists in the early discharge of it, and as I well knew a journey which was founded in filial piety, could not fail of your approbation. I should think myself highly ungrateful therefore, were I to dissemble, that, among other great obligations which I owe to your indulgence, I have this in particular, that in confidence of your favour I have ventured to do without consulting you, what would have been too late had I waited for your consent.

Epist. CXXII. TRAJAN to PLINY.

YOU did me justice, my dear Pliny, by confiding in my affection towards you. Without doubt, if you had waited for my consent to forward your wife in her journey by means of those warrants which I have intrusted to your care, the use of them would not have answered your purpose; since it was proper this visit to her aunt should have the additional recommendation, of being paid with all possible expedition.

THE END.



Edinburgh, Oct. 20. 1762.

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